U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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Evaluation of the
Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program

Case Study Report

Alliance of Information and Referral Systems — NERIN 95105

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PREFACE

On behalf of the National Telecommunications and Information (NTIA), I am pleased to share the following report that is one of a series of case studies conducted on grants awarded by the Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) in 1994 and 1995. The case studies are part of the program's evaluation effort designed to gain knowledge about the effects and lessons of TIIAP-funded projects. NTIA contracted Westat, a research and consulting firm, to perform an independent evaluation of the program's first two years of grants. The evaluation consisted of a mail survey of 206 grant recipient organizations and in-depth case studies of selected projects. In February, 1999, the Commerce Department released Westat's evaluation report.

The projects selected for the case studies cover a broad range of program types and sizes, planning grants as well as demonstration grants, and they show varying degrees of implementation, sustainability, and replication. Westat selected the projects to represent a cross-section of all projects funded in the program's first two years. Specific selection criteria included geographic region, target population, project application area, project category, and size of award. To conduct each case study, Westat reviewed all project files, including progress reports and the final report, and conducted site visits. The site visits consisted of project demonstrations and interviews with project staff, representatives of partner organizations, and project end users.

NTIA thanks the case study participants for their time and their willingness to share not only their successes but their difficulties, too. Most of all, we applaud their pioneering efforts to bring the benefits of advanced telecommunications and information technologies to communities in need. We are excited about the case studies and lessons they contain. It is through the dissemination of these lessons that we extend the benefits of TIIAP-funded projects nationwide.

We hope you find this case study report valuable and encourage you to read other TIIAP case studies. You may obtain additional case studies and other TIIAP publications, including the final Westat evaluation report, through the NTIA web site (www.ntia.doc.gov) or by calling the TIIAP office at (202) 482-2048. We also are interested in your feedback. If you have comments on this case study or suggestions on how TIIAP can better provide information on the results and lessons of its grants, please contact Francine E. Jefferson, Ph.D. at (202) 482-2048 or by email at fjefferson@ntia.doc.gov.

Larry Irving
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information

TIIAP CASE STUDY

Alliance of Information and Referral Systems — NERIN

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report reviews the planning project developed by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) called the National Emergency Resource Information Network (NERIN). AIRS was incorporated to improve access to services for all people through the mechanism of information and referral (I&R). It is a professional membership organization of more than 1,000 individuals and agencies involved in I&R services. The services I&R agencies provide include referral to the proper agency or department that can best service the current need of the client. Local I&R providers know the resources available in the community year round, understand the community and its neighborhoods, and act as a facilitator, resource information provider, and translator (if necessary) on how to access services.[1] NERIN is a project that uses technology to strengthen communities nationwide to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. This goal was achieved by demonstrating how community I&R agencies can establish or enhance protocols for information networks to connect people and resources in the aftermath of a disaster.

Unlike the American Red Cross and federal organizations such as Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), I&Rs are mainly concerned with recovery efforts after the immediate rescue has been made. I&R services begin after this initial period and last indefinitely to help disaster victims put their lives back together. Such services range from helping people find sources of water to referrals for psychological counseling. NERIN is designed to help I&Rs through facilitating the necessary contacts to be effective, providing proper training, and establishing relations with key agencies in preparation for a potential disaster. The NERIN model is composed of six components: training, external relations, internal relations, resource protocols, technology, and a taxonomy of disaster services.

To make NERIN happen, the project team created a two-tier system of partners. On one level, seven cities that participated in the development and testing of the model. Their primary responsibility was to actually build the various components of the NERIN model. These partners included two cities on the West Coast, two on the East Coast, and two in the Central U.S., all of which had recent experience in disaster recovery. On a second level, NERIN project partners also included a number of advising agencies (many of which provide services during disasters) that gave suggestions and feedback for the development of NERIN. These advisors included agencies such as the American Red Cross, FEMA, and the United Way of America.

The NERIN project worked to create standards that reduce costs, facilitate implementation, and increase universality for all those who might use the NERIN model. These activities included:

1. Creation of a common data record,
2. Establishment of standards for accessing data,
3. Establishment of standard reporting formats,
4. Development of protocols to connect I&R programs with each other and with other agencies involved in emergency preparedness and response,

[1] Nearly all communities have I&R services.

5. Creation of direct access paths,
6. Establishment of World Wide Web sites,
7. Development of training,
8. Development of accreditation, and
9. Demonstration of the model.

Since the project had to deal with seven different partner cities and numerous advising agencies, a key problem was communication. The distances were minimized somewhat by modern telecommunications technology, but the problem of keeping partners involved continued. Another problem was that in some cases, turf issues made it difficult for NERIN to involve some agencies. These problems gave way to lessons learned, which included that a group cannot always get a true consensus; it is important to create internal controls to get people to do the work they committed to; and when turf is carefully guarded, be persistent.

The NERIN project produced several impacts:

- Put disaster and intervention management on I&R agendas,
- Gained knowledge about how to serve diverse communities,
- Advanced visibility of I&R services,
- Created bridges between agencies,
- Served both NERIN and I&R organizations,
- Opened doors with policy makers in Washington, DC (TIIAP provided leverage),
- Developed a model for training that can be applied anywhere in the U.S., and
- Refined and expanded *A Taxonomy of Human Services* for national and international use.

AIRS and NERIN partners identified several ideas that they would like to develop in the future. Examples include creating a national 211 number (if funding becomes available) to provide a single number to access I&R services, packaging training for distance learning applications, continuing to refine and expand the taxonomy, and creating NERIN II – working with states to implement the model.

B. OVERVIEW

Purpose and General Approach

The project reviewed in this report is the planning grant developed by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) called the National Emergency Resource Information Network (NERIN). On its website, NERIN states its project goals as the creation of a model that will:

1. Use technology to strengthen communities nationwide to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters;

2. Demonstrate how community information and referral agencies, in partnership with emergency preparedness and response agencies, can establish or enhance protocols for information networks to connect people and resources; and

3. Ensure that information will be appropriate and accurate, based on professional standards and training, and will make a meaningful difference to people and organizations. It will be accessible to all people, especially those who are least able to help themselves.

The project involves information and referral (I&R) agencies, which aid citizens in finding the help they need. The services I&R agencies provide include referral to the proper agency or department that can best service the current need of the client. Local I&R providers know the resources available in the community year round, understand the community and its neighborhoods, and act as a facilitator, resource information provider, and translator (if necessary) on how to access services. I&R providers, if they exist in an area, are the conduit for the flow of resource information before and after a disaster and can provide information on resources to the populations in need of help.[2] For example, in the aftermath of a disaster, I&Rs are called upon to provide a myriad of information ranging from where to find potable water to replacing legal documents. As one can imagine, there is a great deal of information available; the problem is how to best find and utilize it. In many cases, I&Rs are needed to supply information about what is still functioning after the disaster. NERIN was a project to develop a model that would provide the support I&Rs need, elevated to a national level via the information infrastructure and telecommunications technology. There are six components of the NERIN model:

- Training,
- External relations,
- Internal relations,
- Resource protocols,
- Technology, and
- Disaster services taxonomy.

[2] Nearly all communities have I&R services.

Training. One of the key tasks of the NERIN project was training. Seminars were offered at national conferences on how I&R agencies could better attend to the many facets of disaster recovery. The objectives of these seminars were to:

- Help define the organization's mission in disaster and how to carry it out;
- Encourage the organization's linkage to local and regional disaster agencies and coalitions; and
- Strengthen the organizational preparedness so it will be able to carry out its mission.

The types of training included:

- Individual and family preparedness training, so staff could provide communities with essential home preparedness information (e.g., how to secure a home before a hurricane hits);
- Agency preparedness training, which includes both tabletop and functional exercises;[3] and
- Community network training, which includes both tabletop and functional exercises with the inclusion of community-wide training exercises (e.g., evacuation drills).

This training was in addition to workshops for I&R professionals at conferences and other seminar locations. Training that was provided at the 1997 annual AIRS conference included a 3-hour NERIN Tabletop Exercise & Taxonomy session, a 90-minute NERIN Resource and I&R Specialist Training, and a 90-minute NERIN Media Training (see Appendix C). A detailed outline of a similar training activity is provided in Appendix A.

External Relations. A special committee, or subgroup, at NERIN guides the external relations component of the model (see Appendix E for their full report). The subgroup's task was to provide a protocol for developing relationships with other organizations (external to an individual I&R agency) in preparation for a disaster and to develop training for the community organizing process involved. The idea behind this committee is to maximize a community's response and effectiveness in a disaster situation by defining the I&R's role and avenues of cooperation with other agencies.

Community organizing is an essential part of the NERIN model because it is a necessary part of providing adequate services to a community in a disaster. The community will define how services are provided locally in a disaster. However, when the President declares an area a Federally Declared Disaster Site, the American Red Cross (ARC) is assigned responsibility for the federal coordination of mass care services as FEMA's voluntary agency liaison. In any case, given the disarray of communities after a disaster, there is a need to make cooperative agreements ahead of time. Agreements may extend to agencies such as the Salvation Army, Voluntary Organizations Assisting in Disasters (VOAD), and the military.

In addition, the external relations committee pointed out that it is important that I&R agencies be acquainted with the disabled and special needs community. These are people who need special or additional considerations during an emergency situation (such as an evacuation) due to physical, emotional, or mental

[3] A tabletop exercise is one that simulates a disaster at a specified time in the security of a single remote room, while a functional exercise is one that simulates as closely as possible an actual disaster in the particular location that is involved (e.g., Texas, for a flood recovery exercise).

impairments. Also included in this category are the elderly and the infirm, who may require the use of oxygen, respirators, or other life-sustaining equipment.

Internal Relations. The internal operations subgroup guides the development of the internal relations aspect of the NERIN model (see Appendix F for a copy of their report). Their task is to provide protocols for two important relationships: between the AIRS and the current NERIN project participants, and between the NERIN project and the greater I&R community.

The internal relations subgroup identified the following formal protocols for AIRS and the current NERIN participants:

1. AIRS has the ultimate responsibility for the NERIN project, and the AIRS Executive Committee must sign off on all decisions that have a direct impact on the ability to complete the grant project on time and within budget.

2. Questions related to the ways and means of completing the project and its sub-pieces are to be resolved by the NERIN project, through the project director and the internal relations committee.

3. If there are questions about whether an issue falls under point one or two above, the decision will be made by the AIRS Board President.

4. Each NERIN partner must have a clear and binding contract on file with the project director.

5. The NERIN partners are agencies, not individuals.

6. In the case of noncompliance with contract terms, responsibility for correction falls to the project director. This task may be delegated to the project coordinator.

7. The project director and coordinator have the right to re-negotiate a time commitment with a partner, with permission of the other partners affected and providing that the product will be delivered by the end of the grant period.

8. In the case of noncompliance with a target date that goes beyond 7 days, the project director has the right to reassign the responsibility and the compensation that correlated to that responsibility. The project director may utilize a Request for Proposal process in making the assignment.

The following protocols were identified between the NERIN project and the greater I&R community:

1. AIRS will implement a national voluntary mutual aid agreement with its members.

2. If conflict occurs between AIRS and a local I&R or between a local I&R and other disaster response agencies, the project director will attempt to resolve the conflict through mediation.

3. If there are multiple NERIN accredited I&R's in a community, all of these will be cited as I&R contacts in the resource information shared with other disaster response agencies, i.e., FEMA and the American Red Cross.

Types of Resources. The types of resources concern the two main phases of disaster information collection: pre-disaster and recovery information.

Pre-disaster information has two main components: (a) program information specific to potential and developing disaster concerns and (b) program information that can be collected prior to a disaster that provides an I&R with a baseline for creating a viable disaster resource database. Pre-disaster resource classifications, specific to potential and developing disaster concerns, include disaster information hotlines, emergency transport vehicles, and a registry of people with special needs (see Appendix D for a more complete list).

Prior to a disaster, it is important to establish a baseline pre-disaster database. This can be accomplished by surveying existing nonprofit and governmental organizations concerning their anticipated disaster response services. Information about agencies that is important to capture includes the disaster coordinator, after-hours numbers, alternative sites, what services are planned to be delivered after a disaster, what target population will be served, how many staff volunteers will be responding, and whether volunteers are part of a disaster coordination effort. Agencies and programs can be grouped into broad designations that can later be further defined as they actively respond to a community-wide emergency. For example, information could be organized into categories such as building repair, food distribution, and general family assistance.

Recovery is defined as responding to a disaster once the life-threatening danger has passed and people have begun an inventory of their losses. I&Rs are mainly concerned with recovery efforts after the immediate rescue has been made. In community-wide disasters, recovery can be a period that extends to 5 years and can be broken down into recovery/rescue, recovery/remedy, and recovery/survivor periods.

- Recovery/rescue is the time when agencies and outside entities respond to the needs of the victims (after the first 48-72 hours).

- Recovery/remedy is when the actual physical rebuilding is taking place and individuals are putting their personal traumas in perspective.

- Recovery/survivor represents the long-term effects: the permanent changes in the community and the enduring changes in individuals.

The list of needs is long and can include supplying basic needs such as access to food and water to building repair and legal document replacement (see Appendix G for a more complete list).

Technology. AIRS maintains the NERIN website, in addition to its own, and a national database of information on regional contacts for the following.

- NERIN members responsible for providing regional information on contacts.

- American Red Cross special representatives to FEMA and the service delivery units responsible for coordinating disaster response.

- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) listing of 31 national member organizations, 49 state VOADs, and a growing number of substate VOADs.[4] See Appendix H for a listing of national VOAD members.

- United Ways that are involved in disaster planning.

Technology is a touchy area for the NERIN model because a great deal of technology may not be available immediately after the disaster. Thus, preparation needs to be made prior to a disaster so when telecommunications are restored, I&R services will be ready for the deluge of requests from victims.

Disaster Services Taxonomy. The Disaster Services section of *A Taxonomy of Human Services: A Conceptual Framework with Standardized Terminology and Definitions for the Field* provides a classification system that allows organizations maintaining disaster services databases to index and access community resources based on the specific types of disaster services they provide. The structure, which was developed as a part of the NERIN project, is also used to organize NERIN's links to other disaster resources on the Internet.

The Taxonomy presents terminology in a hierarchical structure that groups terms in 10 broad service categories and a separate target groups section. Within each section, terms are broken down in five levels from the most general to the most specific. Term identification numbers mark the place and level of terms within the hierarchy. Definitions, which describe the scope of services, are provided for all terms as well as "see also" references that help the user find related terms in other parts of the hierarchy. An outline is included at the beginning of each section to give users an overview of the hierarchical structure. The Taxonomy also contains an index that displays terms in the hierarchy in alphabetical order, and which also includes synonyms for terms that enable users to access information based on language that is more familiar to them.

Disaster Services is part of the Organizational/Community Services section of the complete Taxonomy. Terminology included in this first section represents services that are available exclusively in an emergency. Subsets of Disaster Services are organized according to the phases of a disaster and include:

- Disaster Management Organizations,

- Disaster Preparedness,

- Disaster Mitigation,

- Disaster Warnings,

- Disaster Response Services,

- Disaster Relief Services, and

[4] National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) is a partnership in disaster response. The organization was founded on the premise that the time to prepare for the next disaster is now. Beginning in 1970, representatives from voluntary organizations began to meet together on a regular basis. The purpose of those early meetings was for participants to share their respective activities, concerns, and frustrations in order to minimize duplication of effort and manage disaster activities more efficiently.

- Disaster Recovery Services.

There are other sections of the Taxonomy that are important for NERIN. Services (such as animal lost and found, drinking water, and public health advisories) that may be important during times of disaster but are also available under other non-emergency conditions have also been included. They are presented in a second section, Disaster Related Terminology in Other Sections of the Taxonomy. A third section is the alphabetical display, which contains disaster-specific and related terms from the first two sections. Definitions are supplied for all terms and “see also,” “use,” and “used for” references are available. The final section contains a list of acronyms common in the disaster field. This is not a part of the full Taxonomy but was created especially for NERIN.

Description of Grant Recipient and Project Partners

Grant Recipient. The Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) was incorporated in 1973 to improve access to services for all people through the mechanism of information and referral. I&Rs often serve people below the poverty line during normal operations. After a disaster, however, I&Rs serve a wide spectrum of social and economic classes. Thus, the mission of AIRS is to unite and serve the field and to advance the profession of I&R as a vital means of bringing people and services together. AIRS meets this goal through its publications, international training conferences, and I&R clearinghouse. It is a professional membership organization of more than 1,000 individuals and agencies involved in I&R services in both the public and private sectors. Through its publications and national networking, it promotes the image of I&R and conveys new developments in the field. AIRS is a nonprofit and membership organization serving I&R interests throughout the U.S. and Canada. Members can become active in the organization by attending national conferences, exchanging information through the newsletter, or working on a number of standing committees. These committees include:

- Advanced Technology
- Accreditation/Certification
- Awards/Recognition
- Communications
- Conference
- Disaster Task Group
- Finance
- Legislative Liaison
- Long Range Planning Task Group
- Membership/Affiliations
- Nominations Elections & Orientation
- Personnel

- Products & Publications
- Taxonomy

Project Partners. There are two levels of project partners for the NERIN project. On one level are the cities that participated in the development and testing of the model. They are officially considered subcontractors by the grant and were provided funds to develop the project at their site. Although they also provided expert advice, their primary responsibility was to actually build the various components of the NERIN model (e.g., training, taxonomy, and testing). These partners included two cities on the West Coast, two on the East Coast, and two in the Central U.S. They represented a range of possible disasters and included the following:

- Northern California Community Services Council, Inc. (San Francisco earthquake)
- INFO LINE of Los Angeles (civil disturbances, fires, floods, and earthquakes)
- Life Line - The Health Association (Rochester, NY)
- Switchboard of Miami (Hurricane Andrew)
- Center for Developmental Disabilities (University of South Carolina)
- United Way of Central Carolinas (Hurricane Hugo)
- United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast (floods)
- United Way of Central Iowa (floods)

On a second level, NERIN project partners also included a number of advising agencies that provided feedback and other help during the development of NERIN. These advisors include the following organizations:

- Alliance for Public Technology
- American Red Cross - National
- EIS International (now Essential Technologies, Inc.)
- Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services
- Northern California Disaster Preparedness Network
- U.S. Department of Defense

- United Way of America
- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)

Alliance for Public Technology. The Alliance for Public Technology (APT) is a membership organization based in Washington, DC. Membership is open to all nonprofit organizations and individuals, not members of the affected industries, concerned with fostering access to useful information, communication services, and technologies. APT's member organizations serve the education, health care, social service, and economic development needs of senior citizens, people with disabilities, minorities, women, children, low-income families, and small business owners.

American Red Cross – National. The American Red Cross is federally mandated (albeit unfunded) to provide disaster relief. It provides a number of services through a branch specifically devoted to disaster services. The mission of American Red Cross Disaster Services is "to ensure nationwide disaster planning, preparedness, community disaster education, mitigation, and response that will provide the American people with quality services delivered in a uniform, consistent, and responsive manner." They are a member of the National VOAD.

Center for Developmental Disabilities - University of South Carolina. The Center is a university-affiliated program at the University of South Carolina in the School of Medicine's Department of Pediatrics. The Center is committed to:

- Being a center of excellence for the creation of solutions to problems facing people with developmental disabilities in South Carolina;
- Being a national resource for technical assistance to states and programs in the area of information technology;
- Collaborating with state and local agencies in the development and implementation of exemplary interdisciplinary services for people with developmental disabilities and their families throughout their life span;
- Providing interdisciplinary training to students, professionals, families, and people with developmental disabilities in a manner that is family-centered, community-based, and coordinated, and ensuring that the interdisciplinary training program is reflective of issues throughout the life span and is responsive to local, state, and national needs;
- Disseminating information to users of services, providers of services, and policy makers that will increase their awareness of state-of-the-art services and contemporary issues affecting the lives of people with developmental disabilities; and
- Investigating issues related to causation and prevention of developmental disabilities and the delivery of family-centered approaches for assisting people with developmental disabilities.

EIS International. EIS International Corporation and EnviroMetrics Software, Inc., have merged to form Essential Technologies, Inc. It is now the world's leading environmental and emergency software provider. They have developed a new system designed to support both crisis response and daily operations for emergency organizations. The software provides capabilities such as message management, task flow tracking, integrated situation reports, electronic damage assessment and recovery capabilities, and interoperability with FEMA's National Emergency Management Information System.

Emergency Information Infrastructure Partnership (EIIP). The EIIP is a consortium of several emergency management associations. Its mission is "to provide innovative solutions to emergency management challenges by exploiting the information infrastructure." EIIP is designed to provide a vehicle to communicate among state, local, tribal, and federal agencies and emergency management organizations. The EIIP works through formal meetings, telephone conferencing, websites, and Internet chat sessions to focus on issues of concern to various constituencies while trying to build a community-wide focus. Topics include resources, information and professional development, professional exchange and networking, technology, and evaluation. In March 1997, the EIIP sponsored the Virtual Forum, a 3-day strategic planning session that facilitated an "exchange of emergency information between those who can provide it to those who need it, and thus a significant step to implementing the *Emergency Lane* of the information superhighway."

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA is an independent agency of the federal government, reporting to the President. Founded in 1979, FEMA's mission is "to reduce loss of life and property and protect our nation's critical infrastructure from all types of hazards through a comprehensive, risk-based, emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery."

INFO LINE of Los Angeles. INFO LINE, another TIIAP grantee, was an integral partner in developing NERIN's taxonomy and training workshops. INFO LINE of Los Angeles is a private, not-for-profit organization and is the largest, most technologically advanced I&R in the nation. It helps 200,000 people each year and has a budget of $3.2 million. Since 1981, INFO LINE of Los Angeles has provided free, confidential services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services are provided in English, Spanish, and 160 other languages. INFO LINE also provides services for the deaf and hearing impaired.

The mission of INFO LINE of Los Angeles is to improve access to health and human services for County residents. This is accomplished by helping people find and effectively use human services; collecting, classifying, and disseminating information about health and human services; and providing leadership, technical assistance, training, and support to other human service agencies.

INFO LINE's information counselors are trained to help people find and access essential human services quickly and efficiently. They assess each person's situation and needs and identify resources that are affordable, accessible, and geographically convenient. When necessary, such as when a person is in imminent physical danger or a translator is needed, these counselors can establish a direct link between the person seeking help and the agency that is able to provide that help via a telephone conference call. Typical requests from the public include emergency food and shelter, legal and financial assistance, health care and substance abuse treatment, children and senior programs, and mental health services. INFO LINE also has special contracts to staff the County's Elder Abuse Reporting Hotline, to operate the Cold Weather Shelter Hotline for the City and County of Los Angeles, and to provide staffing and human services information for emergency centers during disasters.

A full-time team of professional resource information specialists continually updates INFO LINE's database of human services programs. These specialists analyze, organize, and index detailed information on more than 5,000 human services programs using INFO LINE's A Taxonomy of Human Services (the official national standard for I&R). This information is maintained on PRISM, INFO LINE's custom-designed, state-of-the-art human services information and referral software system. This software allows specialists to have immediate access to the latest information on any health and human services program.

It also automatically collects valuable statistical information related to services needed as well as gaps and duplications in services.

Life Line - The Health Association. Life Line is based in Rochester, New York, and offers 24-hour telephone counseling for mental health and medical crises, I&R for area human services, connection to the Finger Lakes regional Poison Center, and short-term mental health counseling.

Los Angeles County Department of Disaster Services. This local emergency management agency for Los Angeles County was an integral partner in developing NERIN's Disaster Services Taxonomy and training workshops.

Northern California Community Services Council, Inc. This partner and subcontractor for the NERIN project has experience in earthquake disasters in the San Francisco area.

Northern California Disaster Preparedness Network. Northern California Disaster Preparedness Network's goal is to be a resource for disaster and emergency preparedness information with an emphasis on information required by people with disabilities or other special needs. Their website allows access to information designed to help individuals and organizations prepare for and cope with a disaster or an emergency. The site includes online brochures and other material from a variety of community organizations as well as links to other sites on the Internet.

Switchboard of Miami, Inc. Switchboard of Miami, Inc., has served Dade County, Florida, since 1968. It is a private, nonprofit, multi-service agency offering 24-hour, 7-day-a-week telephone crisis counseling, suicide prevention, and I&R services. Over 100,000 people use their helpline annually. In the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, the helpline received more than 1,000 calls a day. In addition, the organization provides face-to-face individual and family counseling. Services are provided by telephone, in schools, at clients' homes, and in the agency's facilities. All services are available in English, Spanish, and Creole. The Switchboard also publishes *The HELPages*, a professional's reference to community resources in Dade County. This book contains detailed information about local public and private nonprofit health and human service agencies, including the services they provide, eligibility criteria, fees, hours of operation, names of agency contacts, and other information to assist professionals in making appropriate referrals.

U.S. Department of Defense. The Department of Defense (DoD) often comes to the aid of disaster victims through the National Guard, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other groups overseen by the Department. In addition, the DoD has an Emergency Preparedness Policy that is responsible for the procedures and requirements associated with emergency preparedness, national emergencies, and civil defense. This mission translates specifically into the following functions:

- Formulates emergency preparedness policy and coordinates it within the DoD, as well as other federal departments and agencies.

- Develops national defense policy guidance for mobilization plans, to include developing readiness and emergency planning policies and objectives for military and civilian resource mobilization.

- Develops, coordinates, and oversees implementation of policy for DoD plans and programs related to continuity of operations, military support to civil authorities, military assistance for civil disturbances, and the Key Asset Protection Program.

- In conjunction with the Directorate for NATO Policy, the DoD develops, coordinates, oversees, and supports implementation of the policy in relation to the NATO Senior Civil Emergency Preparedness Committee, Partnership for Peace activities that directly effect NATO Civil Emergency Planning, and the continuing evolution of both.

- Provides DoD representation to federal and state agencies on all matters related to emergency preparedness, mobilization, crisis management, civil defense, and related matters.

- Develops, coordinates, and oversees implementation of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Crisis Management System (CMS) and DoD's interaction with other federal agencies and departments' crisis centers. The CMS effects the coordination of government-wide and OSD crisis management exercises.

- Develops, coordinates, and oversees implementation of infrastructure policy issues to include network warfare, network vulnerability concepts, and information warfare techniques impacting military and civil networks.

United Way of America. United Way is a national system of volunteers, contributors, and local charities built on the proven effectiveness of local organizations helping people in their own communities. United Way of America is the national membership organization that supports nearly 1,400 independent local United Ways across the country with services and training. The United Way funds more than 200 programs through 82 nonprofit health and human service agencies. They operate a 24-hour helpline, food for the hungry programs, help for parents, services for seniors, and programs that strengthen nonprofit agencies.

United Ways of Central Carolinas, Central Iowa, and the Texas Gulf Coast. The United Ways of Central Carolinas, Central Iowa, and the Texas Gulf Coast extend support to their geographic areas through various agencies and service centers that offer operational space to nonprofit organizations. They also participate in many programs offered through the national office of the United Way.

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD). NVOAD is a member of the national VOAD and boasts several members with national disaster response and recovery experience.

Project Costs

The estimated project cost for the 18-month NERIN project was $593,000. TIIAP granted $268,785, and the remaining $324,215 (55 percent) came from the applicant.

C. PROJECT CONTEXT

Community Description

The community served by the NERIN project is said to be nationwide. Although there were only seven test sites, they provide models for communities throughout the U.S. to help them develop their own disaster response plans. The project currently provides tools for over 1,000 professionals to support the area of disaster recovery. NERIN was described as serving a nationwide area and, as such, is descriptive of the necessity of I&R services in the aftermath of a disaster.

Status of Telecommunications/Information Infrastructure Environment Prior to the TIIAP Project

Prior to the TIIAP grant, there was no NERIN project and no specific organization of the Disaster Services Taxonomy. The infrastructure developed, tested, and implemented through the NERIN project was a model that heightens preparedness for disasters and the ability of I&Rs to respond to needs after the dust of a disaster has settled. In the wake of a disaster, telecommunications are often inoperative and many changes occur in the services available to citizens. Being prepared for these changes can help the I&R process when it resumes, approximately 48-72 hours after the devastation. During disaster recovery, the needs of citizens skyrocket as they are displaced from their homes or otherwise find their world dramatically changed. Having an organized I&R infrastructure can help immensely in speeding the recovery of disaster areas and the survivors. Therefore, the infrastructure that was developed by this project was not wholly telecommunications oriented, but was (and continues to be) an important dimension for the nation's commercial and human services infrastructure.

D. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Activities/Milestones That Occurred Prior to the TIIAP Grant Period

Activity prior to the grant was seen in several areas that were later expanded by the NERIN project.

- The Taxonomy was in its second edition at the time of the TIIAP grant award. At that time the Taxonomy tended to have a California, rather than national focus, and no separate section devoted to disaster services.

- Disaster training also occurred before the grant, but largely on the local level. The AIRS annual disaster conference had training sessions, but they were not well attended (many I&Rs originally did not see how it applied to them).

- Local level I&R also occurred in Los Angeles and at other sites throughout the country. In LA, local I&R had occurred since 1981 through INFO LINE. Some partnerships existed. For example, INFO LINE already had partnerships with the telephone company, FEMA, United Way San Diego, and AIRS.

- Some I&R manuals already existed.

The idea for the TIIAP project came from a consultant on the AIRS board who was interested in technology issues. This provided the impetus for the TIIAP application and an important source of support for the project.

Activities/Milestones That Occurred During the TIIAP Grant Period

In general, the NERIN project worked to create standards that reduce costs, facilitate implementation, and increase universality for all those who might use the NERIN model. These activities included:

1. Creation of a common data record.

2. Establishment of standards for accessing data.

3. Establishment of standard reporting formats.

4. Development of protocols to connect I&R programs with each other and with other agencies involved in emergency preparedness and response.

5. Creation of direct access paths.

6. Establishment of World Wide Web sites.

7. Development of training.

8. Development of accreditation.

9. Demonstration of the model.

These outcomes were achieved through the following NERIN project activities timeline.

November 1995

- Staffing needs were identified.
- Organizational structure was established.
- Literature search began.

December 1995

- Scope of work was identified for I&R partners.
- NERIN listserv and home page was developed.

January 1996

- Project coordinator was hired.
- First meeting of the NERIN Advisory Committee was held.
- Subcontract agreements were finalized.

February 1996

- Fax broadcast list was set up to facilitate communication between partners and workgroups.

- Advisory Committee members set guidelines for use of the listserv.
- E-mail addresses were identified for all Advisory Committee members.

March 1996

- Guidelines for testing the model were set.
- Workgroups began posting information to the NERIN listserv.

April 1996

- Protocols for the maintenance of national disaster resources were drafted.
- First draft of the following model elements was drafted and posted on the NERIN listserv for comment:
- Types of resources to be listed in the disaster database,
- Elements of a common data record,
- Protocols for the collection, reporting, and management of database records,
- Disaster training and syllabi,
- Relationships and roles between participants in the NERIN project and the greater I&R community,
- Relationships and roles with other community organizations involved in disaster response, and
- Bibliography on material related to disaster response.

May 1996

- Second meeting of the NERIN Advisory Committee was held.
- The NERIN model was finalized.
- Seven workshops on disaster preparedness and the role of I&R providers were presented at the AIRS annual conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.
- Focus groups on the NERIN model were held at the AIRS annual conference.
- Technological components necessary to implement the NERIN model were identified.
- Methods for testing and evaluating the NERIN model were finalized.
- Progress to date was evaluated.

June 1996

- Elements of the NERIN model began to be implemented.

August 1996

- A Disaster Training Needs Survey was created (see Appendix B).

September 1996

- Participated in a site visit on September 25-26 with the TIIAP Project Officer.
- Provided a 3-hour training at the Northwest Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (NW-AIRS) annual conference on the NERIN model and other disaster preparedness and response information.

October 1996

- Provided a 4-hour training at the California Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (CAIRNS) annual conference on the NERIN model.
- Created the initial draft of the Taxonomy of Disaster Services.

November 1996

- Held third meeting of the NERIN Advisory Committee.
- Held table-top exercises at EIS International.
- Taxonomy codes and definitions for disaster-related services were circulated for comments.
- Progress to date was evaluated.

December 1996

- Began final testing and evaluation of NERIN model.
- Drafted a process for accreditation of AIRS member agencies that wished to be disaster trained and prepared.
- A media-training component was created.

January 1997

- A concept paper for the implementation phase of the NERIN model was drafted.

March 1997

- Provided a demonstration of the NERIN model to the staff of FEMA.

April 1997

- A simulated disaster exercise was conducted with the seven I&R partner sites (see Appendix I).

May 1997

- Held the final meeting of the NERIN Advisory Committee.
- Seven workshops on disaster preparedness and the role of I&R providers were presented at the AIRS annual conference in Houston, Texas.
- The NERIN project was presented to participants of the 1997 AIRS conference.

- A keyword list was created to provide an alternate way to organize and retrieve resource information in a disaster database for those not using the Taxonomy.

More specifically, of the activities enumerated above, there were several accomplishments that should be highlighted that concern the components of NERIN. These are areas that surpass what might be expected of a planning project and include training, accreditation (and certification), the Taxonomy, the website, and demonstration of the NERIN model.

Training. During the grant, a number of training sessions were conducted. At the AIRS 1996 conference, over 18 hours of training workshops were given. Included were:

- Crisis and Post-Disaster Intervention
- How to Plan for the Olympics and Other Disasters
- Operation of a Heat Hotline During Hot Weather Emergencies
- I&R in Disaster Recovery: Being Prepared to Help the Community in Need

Also in 1996, training was provided at two regional conferences. At the Northwest Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (NW-AIRS) annual conference, a 3-hour training session was offered on the NERIN model and other disaster preparedness and recovery information. At the California Alliance of Information & Referral Systems (CAIRS) annual conference, a 4-hour training session on the NERIN model was conducted.

Accreditation and Certification. Closely associated with the training is the accreditation and certification process. The NERIN project worked to create national accreditation for organizations. The training workshops were often a key part of both these processes. Prior to NERIN, no accreditation procedures were in place; they were developed through the project's grant period.

Taxonomy. In the fall of 1996, a draft of the Taxonomy of Disaster Services was completed. This provides a classification system that allows organizations maintaining human services databases to index and access community resources based on the specific types of disaster services they provide. It was developed as part of the NERIN project and was integrated into the much larger, *A Taxonomy of Human Services: A Conceptual Framework with Standardized Terminology and Definitions for the Field* (see the Disaster Services Taxonomy section above).

Website. Early into the project, the Gopher-based system to be developed during the grant period was abandoned and a web-based system took its place. Both the AIRS and NERIN websites came online during the early days of the project. They can be accessed at http://www.airs.org.

Demonstration. The NERIN model was rolled out during the 1997 annual AIRS conference. In general the model was well received. Evaluation data were collected and appear in the "Evaluation" section below.

Other. During the grant period there were also two changes requested.

1. Winter 1996 – TIIAP granted a no-cost extension for the NERIN project to July 15, 1997. This was to allow for a demonstration of the NERIN model with its membership and to conduct an evaluation. The demonstration and evaluation were scheduled during their annual conference in May 1997.

2. February 1997 – TIIAP approved a budget revision. The revision was necessary due to higher than anticipated travel costs, salary expenditures, and equipment expenses. The corresponding cut was made in the publications budget, which was not as necessary as initially surmised.

Steps Taken to Sustain Project Activities Beyond the TIIAP Grant Period

AIRS supports the NERIN project through a variety of means. AIRS sells publications, holds conferences, charges fees for membership, runs a Certified I & R Specialist (CIRS) program, and provides organizational accreditation which all help to support NERIN to some degree. AIRS also actively seeks grants and other awards from the public and private sectors.

Activities/Milestones That Occurred Following the TIIAP Grant Period

The activities that were developed during the grant period continue to be implemented.

- The workshops offered in Myrtle Beach and Houston were refined and again offered at the AIRS annual conference in Atlanta, Georgia. The conference offered seven 90-minute workshops.

- AIRS has updated their website as well as the NERIN website.

- AIRS sent a representative to the National VOAD conference to continue to develop the network of post-disaster I&R providers.

- AIRS provides continuing technical assistance for I&R agencies.

Project Goals Not Met

Although all goals for the planning grant were completed, the partners wanted to create a single national database for I&R. This was more difficult to create than originally anticipated, but continues to be a goal of AIRS and its partners.

Problems

Communication – given the multiple partners and the distances between them, communication became a barrier to smooth development of the project. Although telecommunications were available, they were too costly to implement (e.g., video conferencing) or became unwieldy due to various snafus. For example, in February and March 1996 there were technical difficulties in using the listserv, and project workgroups had to fax or e-mail their reports to the Advisory Committee.

Keeping people involved – distance also likely contributed to the difficulty of keeping people involved with project. This led to delays in fully developing the model.

E. PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND IMPACT

Technology-Related Accomplishments

There are two technology-related accomplishments associated with the NERIN project. The first is the website. The AIRS website contains access to the NERIN website, and a great deal of information is available on these sites. Improvements could still be made (e.g., documents available in PDF for easier downloading), but on the whole, the site offers quality as well as quantity of information.

The second, and more important, technological accomplishment concerns the software that has been developed to test and improve the NERIN model. The software was developed to simulate disaster scenarios so that I&R organizations can better deal with disasters when they happen. The software is an integral part of the NERIN model and allows training for disasters to attain a higher level than previously available.

Impact of Project on Direct End Users

Since there had been no major disasters between the development of the model and the site visit, an actual utilization of the model was not needed and real impacts are difficult to determine. This notwithstanding, positive impacts of NERIN have been reported. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the impact on service providers is that they are more prepared to help disaster victims in the event of an emergency. That is, they are better networked, have plans developed, and have a common terminology established to better communicate with each other, which should lead to improved effectiveness in emergency situations.

Direct end users of the system tend to be AIRS members or other I&R personnel. Although the NERIN model is used mainly by professional disaster service providers, the current trend is for more non-professionals to become involved in using the information distributed. Training, for example, attracts people from all over the regions in which it is offered. Training has been offered at national meetings in 1995 (to 35 participants) and 1996 (to 45 participants). There have also been regional training sessions in California and the Northwest as well as an international session in Toronto, Canada.

Impact of the Project on Other Beneficiaries and/or the Overall Community

The following impacts were reported:

- Put Disaster and Intervention Management on I&R agendas,
- Gained knowledge about how to serve diverse communities,
- Advanced visibility of I&R services,
- Created bridges between agencies,

- Served both NERIN and I&R organizations,

- Opened doors with policy makers in Washington, DC (TIIAP provided leverage),

- Developed a model for training that can be applied anywhere in the U.S., and

- Refined and expanded *A Taxonomy of Human Services* for national and international use.

Impact of the Project on Grant Recipients and Project Partners

The NERIN project had several impacts on the subcontracting partners so that they may be more prepared for a coming disaster. For instance, these partners:

- Tested the NERIN model (see the Evaluation section below),

- Finalized pre-disaster database,

- Made explicit how different pieces of disaster recovery logistics relate, and

- Provided higher visibility for I&R in their communities.

Impact of TIIAP Support on the Initiative

As one project participant stated, “TIIAP was like a jumpstart.” It was, he continued, “an infusion of funds to work on something that has staying power.” The TIIAP grant gave NERIN a level of prestige that it did not have before the award. This impacted the project in several ways.

- Training participants increased. Before the grant, training workshops at national conferences drew six people. After the grant, they were unable to accommodate all potential trainees as numbers exceeded estimates and, consequently, room sizes.

- TIIAP dollars gave the project visibility. This “got the message out” that disaster could happen anywhere and there were ways to prepare for those events.

- Provided the impetus for a disaster service taxonomy. Whereas there had been a human services taxonomy before the grant, the disaster services aspect of it needed to be developed. TIIAP provided funds for this to happen.

- Sped up the development process. Without TIIAP funds, the NERIN project would not have developed as quickly as it did.

F. EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

Evaluation

An evaluation of the NERIN model was conducted during the annual AIRS conference in Houston, during May 18-22, 1997. This conference had approximately 575 attendees and provided a good opportunity to receive feedback on NERIN. It is not clear how the evaluation data were collected or whether they were collected systematically. However, AIRS did compile a list of strengths and suggestions for improvement of the model.

Strengths of the model included that it provided:

- Delivery of key information on how to become involved in disaster services,
- Practical examples and material,
- Hands-on training,
- Useful website,
- The ability to network with agencies during a disaster,
- The ability to bring agencies together to form a disaster plan,
- The ability to learn about the interrelations of disaster relief organizations,
- Information on disaster organizations,
- Lessons learned from previous disasters – what to prepare for, follow-up,
- Information on how to set up policy and procedures for establishing an agency plan,
- Disaster Services Taxonomy,
- Accessibility to everyone,
- Overview of assistance available,
- Systematic links to government, private, and county organizations involved in disasters, and
- Excellent step-by-step instructions on how to accomplish implementation of the model.

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Further develop the website and links from a novice user's perspective,
- Need more links within the NERIN system,
- Need Taxonomy link,

- Compress the information,
- Streamline protocols for agency,
- Continue to develop networks and collaborations,
- Easier access to find topic or cross-reference,
- Need a page with definitions of terms,
- Have a 1-hour training module: Introduction to Disaster planning featuring what NERIN has to offer, and
- Include instructions for agencies on how to incorporate the model.

In addition to the conference evaluation, NERIN was tested via both functional and tabletop exercises. In the fall of 1996, a tabletop exercise was performed in Rockville, Maryland, at EIS, a project partner. The partner sites came together and reacted to a simulated disaster, then engaged in a discussion about the model. They determined what information they could (and could not) find and found that there was no template for a memo of understanding (needed for optimum preparedness).

In April 1997, a decentralized functional exercise was performed (see Appendix I). Each community received a disaster description tailored to the particular site (e.g., a hurricane in Miami). Sites received 8 to 10 questions each that they had to answer in a short period of time. The biggest problem was dealing with the delays caused by communication problems; in future tests, different ways of getting the message across (e.g., have battery power for laptops or generator power for PCs) will be used. In sum, these exercises allowed for refinement of the model and the modes of communication to use in emergency situations.

Dissemination

AIRS has an annual conference that offers workshops and other avenues to disseminate information about the program. They have included a module in these workshops that specifically discusses the NERIN project. As briefly discussed above, this NERIN module includes the project’s vision, its TIIAP funding, project members, goals, timeline, and workgroups (e.g., training, internal and external relations subgroups, special populations, resources, and technology).

AIRS also has a number of publications that may have referenced the NERIN project, which include the following.

- ABCs of I&R
- AIRS Annual Report
- AIRS Newsletter
- Certification Application Packet
- Directory of I&R Services in U.S. and Canada

- AIRS/United Way National Standards for I&R
- *Information and Referral: The Journal of the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems*
- *Out of the Shadows*
- *A Taxonomy of Human Services: A Conceptual Framework with Standardized Terminology and Definitions for the Field*

Another avenue of dissemination is the NERIN website (http://www.airs.org/nerin).

G. LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons reported include the following:

- **There is a role for I&R** – through the development of NERIN, it became clearer than ever that I&R services are essential for the operation and full recovery of communities after a disaster.
- **Maintain a consistent liaison with agencies** – agency representatives would change, and it took valuable time away to bring them up to speed.
- **Send messages in the body of an e-mail** – due to incompatibility problems with technology, it is better to write it in the e-mail than send a communication as an attachment.
- **Need consistent software** – similar to the previous lesson, consistent software (Word versus Word Perfect) will also reduce compatibility problems, particularly if the versions are also consistent.
- **Need to audit books** – the burden of federal reporting requirements can be great for independent associations. A periodic audit can help to keep important records in order and accounting requirements on track.
- **Cannot always get a true consensus** – because of communication problems and minor disagreements, it is sometimes best to move on rather than be stalled by the inevitable absences, abstentions, and objections.
- **Create internal controls to get people to do the work they committed to** – on occasion, even the dedicated need to be made accountable to deadlines. An internal accountability agency, such as an Advisory Committee, may need to reassess assignments and redistribute work so they can be completed in a timely manner.

- **When turf is guarded, be persistent** – breaking through to organizations and their constituencies may require:

  1. Showing nonduplication of services,
  2. Building credibility,
  3. Showing how your organization can help them,
  4. Being aware of specific protocols,
  5. Cultivating people, and
  6. Working at the local level (community building).

- **Conduct tabletop and functional exercises** – have experience with technology before disaster strikes so that skills are developed to use during an emergency.

- **E-mail is not a good way to communicate during a disaster --** it takes too much time (back and forth messages) and telecommunications may be damaged or out of commission during a disaster.

- **Make model available in different formats** – there will be I&Rs without computers; therefore, accommodations should be made. There was a problem with the Iowa site because they did not have an adequate number of computers with modems.

- **Use a facilitator for large meetings** – although it was not in the original proposal, a facilitator was used for 3 meetings of the full advisory group – it was necessary to get participant buy-in.

H. FUTURE PLANS

AIRS and NERIN partners identified the following future plans.

- Creating a national 211 number (if funding becomes available) to provide a single number to access I&R services,

- Packaging the training for distance learning applications,

- Continuing to refine and expand the Taxonomy – the 4th edition is slated to include reviews by subject area experts, and

- Creating NERIN II – working with larger regions (states), not just cities and regions within states, to implement the model.

APPENDIX A

DISASTER RELATED INFORMATION AND REFERRAL TRAINING

SCHEDULE FOR FULL-DAY TRAINING

(4-1/2 hours plus lunch and breaks)

9:00 - 9:30	Module 1, Introduction
9:30 - 10:15,	Module 2, Maximizing Survivability & Effectiveness
10:15-10:30	Break
10:30 - 11:15	Module 3, Role and Mission in Disaster
11:15 -11:45	Module 4, NERIN
11:45 - 12:00	Module 5, Federal Emergency Response Plan
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 1:45	Module 6, Coordination of CBO Efforts
1:45 - 2:15	Module 7, ICS as Organizing Concept
2:15 - 2:45	Module 8, Writing Your Emergency Manual
2:45 - 3:00	Module 9, Next Steps For Accreditation

MODULE 1 - INTRODUCTION [Time: 1/2 hour]

A. Housekeeping: schedule, restrooms, etc.

B. Introductions

1.Presenters, include credentials

2.Attendees

C. Packet contents

D. Objectives of this training

E. QUERY: PARTICIPANTS' OBJECTIVES

OVERHEAD: OBJECTIVES

1.To help you define your organization's mission in disaster and how to carry it out

2.To encourage your organization's linkage to local and regional disaster agencies and coalitions

3.To strengthen your organizational preparedness so you will be able to carry out your mission

F. Do not be paralyzed because a worst case disaster would put agency out of commission

G. Other issues

1.While CBOs can play a role from the beginning, our most crucial role starts a few days into the event and can last for years

2.OVERHEAD: PHASES OF DISASTER

3."Disaster response" has a specific meaning among disaster planners

a. Immediate actions to protect lives and property

1.Law enforcement

2.Fire services

3.Medical and public health agencies

4.Building services

4.What we are usually involved in is "disaster relief" and/or "disaster recovery"

a. Relief needs usually arise at the very beginning of an event and are over relatively quickly, although they may extend beyond response efforts

b. Immediate mass care and shelter for people made homeless by disaster

c. Recovery includes all the long-term efforts to return to community to its pre-disaster condition

d. Recovery issues may arise at the very beginning of an event but continue on much longer than response or relief

5.Plan for the most serious disaster your agency is capable of responding to

6.Plan for the quickest possible recovery from a worse one

H. Reasons for your agency to be involved in disaster recovery

1.Service to the community

2.Visibility

3.Greater funding security

MODULE 2 - MAXIMIZING YOUR SURVIVABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS [Time: ¾ hour]

A. Are there more disasters now than in years past?

1.For natural disasters there does not seem to be a long range trend

2.Definitely are more man-made disasters, e.g. hazardous material incidents

3.What has increased is the impact of disasters on humans

a. More people living in vulnerable areas

b. More crowding in inner cities

B. Threat Assessment

1.Two types of threat assessments

a. Internal: what are the threats to your agency's continued operations

1.Loss of power

2.Loss of communications

3.Loss of records

b. External: what are the service implications of a threat for your organization

1.Demand for more services

2.Demand for different services

3.Demand for services delivered in unusual ways

2.What are the threats to your agency? (QUERY)

3.Need to determine what kinds of threats are most likely for your area and plan for those

a. There is excellent information about threat assessment, hazard mitigation, staff safety and psychological concerns available in all communities

1.County and city office of emergency services

2.Local American Red Cross chapter

3.Local fire department

C. Building and environment safety

1.

a. What is required depends on the threats that can realistically be expected

1.Mitigation for earthquake and tornado would be similar; for hurricane or hazardous material incidents would be completely different

2.Impossible to provide specific advice in this forum

b. Get information from local emergency management office and American Red Cross

2.Building evacuation and relocation

a. Develop evacuation plan

1.Keep checklist and roster by each exit

2.Do evacuation drills

b. Consider options for temporary relocation of facility

1.Share with another agency?

2.Telecommute?

3.Post-disaster building inspection

a. Learn what constitutes real danger signs, what are just appearance problems

b. Might be able to arrange with local authorities for priority inspection if doing vital work following a disaster

D. Protecting vital records (computer and paper files)

1.Think of what would happen if you lose:

a. Payroll, financial and personnel records

b. Client records

c. Software and computer files

2.Use standard good practice, e.g., doing regular computer back-ups and storing tapes off-site

3.Possibly obtain a fire-safe file cabinet for vital records

E. Staff's physical and emotional well-being

1.Accounting for staff; being sure no-one is missing

a. Check rest rooms, other isolated areas

b. Do not endanger other staff to rescue people from hazardous situations, e.g., buildings in danger of collapse

2.Treat injuries or get help

a. Have at last some staff first aid trained

b. Have list of nearby medical facilities

3.Dealing with staff's immediate emotional response to disaster

a. Need for assurance of families' well-being

1.Employees who are worried about their families will not be effective until they have reassurance

2.For most CBOs, the fact that some employees will leave the worksite immediately following an event is not critical; our primary work begins later

a. However, there may be a safety problem if people try to go into an impacted area; if it is possible to get information through government contacts that might be helpful

b. Staff might need reassurance from a building inspector or an engineer before they are comfortable going back inside

4. Dealing with longer-term problems: burnout and overload from extraordinary demands, longer hours, and stress

a. Using internal resources to cope with stress

b. Getting outside mental health assistance

5.Knowing when to cut back on efforts because of staff burn-out

F. Types of training

1. Individual and family preparedness training
    a. Our staff should be models for the community in home preparedness
2. Agency preparedness training
    a. Duck and cover and evacuation drill
    b. Table-top
    c. Functional
3. Community network training
    a. Table-top
    b. Functional
    c. Inclusion in county-wide training

HANDOUT: TYPES OF TRAINING

G. Staffing

1. Identifying critical staff
2. Staff report-in; call-back roster
3. Maximizing normal staff resources
    a. Some staff will be unavailable due to disaster
    b. Can they be replaced with volunteers and/or mutual aid
4. Setting priorities when demands exceed capacity

BREAK

MODULE 3 - YOUR ORGANIZATION'S DISASTER MISSION AND ROLE [Time 3/4 hour]

A. Poverty and disaster

1. Past disaster planning based on model of middle class family
2. People who are already vulnerable are hurt worst in most disasters
3. OVERHEAD: "THE MAGNET"
    a. Poverty is a magnet for disaster
        1. Old housing most likely to be damaged
        2. Have fewer resources to fall back on
        3. Are most likely to lose jobs
    b. Other forms of vulnerability also heighten risk
        1. Disability

2.Inability to speak English

4.CBOs who work with at-risk populations all the time are the most likely to know their needs, and how to assist with recovery following a disaster

B. Your organization's mission in disaster

OVERHEAD: ORG'S MISSION

1.Work in disaster should be based on developed strengths and knowledge

a. Ability to assist people in crisis

b. Knowledge of your communities and clientele

1.What are the predictable needs of your clientele in an emergency

C. What is primary, disaster or normal mission?

1.Essential to be clear both internally and with other organizations about this

2.If mission changes during disaster all levels of organization, including board of directors, must buy-in

D. What are the tasks I&Rs can perform following a disaster? (QUERY)

1.Disseminate special emergency information to the public

2.Disseminate special emergency information to other agencies, government and media

3.Single point of contact for communications between CBOs and between government and CBOs

4.Rumor control

5.Coordination of spontaneous volunteers and in-kind donations

6.Handle non-emergency 911 calls

7.Systemic advocacy

8.Ombudsman

9.Referrals to services outside the emergency network

10.Help develop CBO collaborative

E. The internal disaster committee - a standing committee

1.Carries out disaster plan during emergencies

2.Does planning and training in peacetime

3.Based on function, not on hierarchical levels

F. Recovery of extraordinary disaster-related expenses

1.Must keep complete, detailed and accurate records from first hour

a. Assign this task to a specific person or office

b. Later reconstruction of financial activity is sometimes necessary but never adequate

2.Sources for reimbursement

a. Federal government

1.Stafford Act – the framework for federal reimbursement for disaster expenses

2.HANDOUT: STAFFORD ACT

a. Money is available to non-profit to repair damage to facilities and equipment

b. New regulations: no FEMA money available to CBOs for disaster operational expenses

i. Claim must go to city or county

ii. City or county claims to FEMA

b. State, county, city government

1. Generally, government money is only available to non-profit for disaster if agency is providing service that the government would be otherwise obligated to provide

a. The best possibility for government reimbursement is through agreement with the government agency that your organization already has a close, natural relationship with

b. Seek a pre-arrangement; reimbursement after the fact is unlikely

c. Possible non-government cost recovery mechanisms

1.United Way

2. Special foundation and corporate grants

a. Much more likely to receive a grant if part of an organized effort

3. Without a pre-existing arrangement or strong precedent it is prudent to assume that costs will not be recovered

a. Need a clear decision about how many resources agency will expend if reimbursement is questionable

G. Disaster activity log

1. Detailed record of agency critical meetings, decisions and actions

a. Who made what decisions

b. Record of important inter-agency contacts and agreements

2. Vital for after-action report for future planning

MODULE 4 - NERIN [Time 1/2 hour]

A. Vision for the project: Creation of a model information infrastructure to:

1.Use technology to strengthen communities nationwide to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters

2.Document how community information and referral agencies, in partnership with emergency preparedness and response agencies, can establish or enhance protocols for information networks that will connect people and resources

3. Insure the accuracy and appropriateness of information

a. Based on professional standards and training

b. Make a meaningful difference to people and organizations

c. Will be accessible to all people, especially those least able to help themselves

B. Funding

1. Telecommunications and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program (TIIAP) of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce

2 .Match from project partners

C. Advisory Committee (how representative will this model be?)

1. At-large members

2. I&R partners

D. Goals/anticipated outcomes (creation of standards to reduce costs, facilitate implementation, and increase universality for all who may use the resultant model)

1. Creation of a common data record

2. Establishment of standards for accessing data

3. Establishment of standard reporting formats

4. Development of protocols to connect I&R programs with each other and with other agencies involved in emergency preparedness and response

5. Creation of direct access paths

6. Establishment of Gopher and World Wide Web sites

7. Development of training

8. Development of accreditation

9. Demonstration of the model

E. Timeline

1. Advisory Committee meetings

2. Development of model

3. Installation and testing of model

F. Workgroups

1. Training

a. Organizational focus

b. Client focus

2. External relations

3. Internal relations

4. Resource information

a. Data elements

b. Taxonomy

5. Technology
6. Special populations

MODULE 5 - FEDERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN [Time 1/4 hour]

OVERHEAD: THE FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN

A. FEMA overall organization defined in the Stafford Act-- note that most of the Federal Response Plan is actually recovery

1. Implementation requires a Presidential disaster declaration
2. Designation of a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO)
3. The Disaster Field Office (DFO)--coordination point for federal response
4. FEMA works through the state where the disaster occurred

OVERHEAD: EMERGENCY SERVICE FUNCTIONS

B. FEMA organization into ESF's

1. Define and explain ESF's- shows responsibilities for management at the federal level--
2. Not all ESF's are activated in every disaster
3. ESF6: shelter (American Red Cross)
4. ESF11: food (USDA)

C. Working with the FEMA NFP liaison to get through the federal bureaucracy

D. Relationship of FEMA to NVOAD

E. Relate to local I&R's-- after the DFO is established-- need to create a relationship with the NFP liaison and the DFO public information office-- often called a Joint Information Center (JIC)

LUNCH Time: 1 hour

MODULE 6 - COORDINATION OF CBOs' EFFORTS [Time 3/4 hour]

A. Important to ascertain who is already active in disaster planning in your community

B. Primary organizations involved in disaster response, relief and recovery:

1.The American Red Cross (ARC)

a. The place to start. In many communities they coordinate volunteer efforts to provide relief during times of disaster

1.In some communities they convene VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster)

2.Important to ascertain if there is currently an active VOAD in your community

b. ARC has a regional position called a VOLAG (Volunteer Agency Liaison) This is the designated person for establishing relationships with local and regional CBOs

2. VOAD

a. If a VOAD already exists it may have a number of Memorandums of Agreement in place and it could facilitate your joining the disaster relief/recovery efforts

1.Who is in VOAD

2.OVERHEAD: VOAD ORGANIZATION CHART

HANDOUT: NVOAD MEMBERS

3.In some communities and states only the local affiliates of NVOAD members are allowed to vote and, sometimes, to attend

4.NVOAD is now strongly encouraging local VOADs to include local agencies

5.AIRS has applied to become an affiliate member of NVOAD

3. Local Emergency Management

a. Can be a full-time position or staff or a volunteer, depending on size of community and propensity for disaster

b. Need to ascertain whether city or county is most relevant level to work with

1. Depends on designation of responsibilities

2. Depends also on your service area

c. Designated to provide the lead during the emergency response to a disaster

1. Set priorities for response

2. Secure the safety of the populace

3. Protect property

4. Get people to shelter and hospitals

5. Control traffic

6. Provide emergency fire and rescue service

d. May be located in:

1. city planning department

2. county commissioner’s office

3. fire department chief

4. sheriff’s office

5. local EMS provider

e. ARC is a good source for information about the emergency management structure in your community

f. NERIN will be gathering regional and state information and state emergency management will invariably be able to assist you in locating municipal emergency management representative

4.The Salvation Army

a. Does not have the Congressional mandate the ARC has to provide relief during a disaster but is very active in their response

1.May augment ARC efforts

2.May provide similar services to ARC in areas underserved by ARC

b. In some communities there is conflict between TSA and ARC

1.If so, it is important to remember that the ARC is the agency federally mandated to provide disaster relief

5.The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

6.Church ministries

a. Many religious groups have a commitment to serve their communities in times of disasters

b. Their national office may already have written agreements with ARC and be members of NVOAD

c. If a local interfaith ministry group exists in the community they may have begun preparation for cooperative service during times of disaster

7. The United Way

a. In some communities the United Way has served as convenor and/or facilitator of community groups collaborating to provide assistance to community following a disaster

b. UW can frequently bring a number of agencies together to plan and prepare for the coordination of service provision

8. Food Banks

a. Many areas have large food banks that distribute Second Harvest, Dept. of Agriculture and donated goods to local food pantries

b. During disasters these organizations are well poised to accept and distribute large quantities of food to community pantries

9. Gifts-In-Kind Programs

a. Your community may already have an organization that receives and distributes donated clothing, furniture, office supplies and equipment

b. After a disaster, a G-I-K Program can provide a framework for fair and equitable distribution to qualified organizations of goods that corporations may donate

D. How to start establishing the necessary relationships for a community collaborative

1. Essential to know your disaster mission first

    a. AIRS and CAIRS training will help prepare you

2. Possible approaches include:

    a. Work through existing human service networks

    b. Work with local United Way

    c. Work one-on-one with key agencies

    d. Call a town meeting

    e. Contact an I&R that is experienced in disaster work for advice (locate through AIRS)

    f. Contact ARC and get their introductory training on disaster

1.Prepares you and your staff for other training available through ARC

2. Provides a foundation for beginning to work with ARC

E. Three big reasons why agencies in your community should join a disaster planning coalition

1. Operating on their own they cannot accurately gauge priorities

    a. Danger of exhausting resources at the beginning of event when they will be most needed later

    b. Danger of attempting work that agency is not capable of

2. Coordination with other agencies will be much more effective if it is pre-planned and drilled

3. Much greater likelihood of reimbursement for expenses when operating as part of a larger structure

F. Mutual Aid Among Nonprofit Agencies

HANDOUT: SAN DIEGO/LOS ANGELES MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

MODULE 7 - ICS AS AN ORGANIZING CONCEPT [Time 1/2 hour]

A. ICS is a standardized on-scene emergency management system developed by California fire services

1.Used at all levels from field to state

B. ICS provides a uniform, flexible management structure to coordinate disaster response

C. It provides a uniform terminology for essential functions

D. ICS places people in roles based on standardized functions

1.In government ICS structures each function has a chief and support staff

E. The ICS functions

OVERHEAD: ICS

1.Management

    a. Responsible for overall emergency policy and coordination across the organization’s span of control

    b. The management function usually includes liaison with other agencies

c. In a CBO the Executive Director or Disaster Coordinator

2. Operations

a. Coordinates operation to respond to emergency

b. Implements the emergency plan of the organization

c. In a CBO, means the direct provision of the services the organization provides following a disaster

3. Planning

a. Collects, evaluates and disseminates information and maintains documentation

b. Develops action plan in coordination with other functions

c. In a CBO, this needs to be a designated person or department for effective disaster work

4. Logistics

a. Provides facilities, services, personnel, equipment, and materials

b. In a CBO this might be office manager, facilities manager - whoever is good at getting the things you will need in an emergency

5. Finance

a. Financial activities and administrative aspects not assigned to other functions

b. Includes record-keeping and documentation

c. Setting up new accounts for emergency expenditures

d. Seeking reimbursement

MODULE 8: WRITING YOUR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS MANUAL [Time: 1/2 hour]

HANDOUT: MANUALS

MODULE 9 - NEXT STEPS TOWARDS ACCREDITATION [Time 1/4 hour]

A. Write a formal Emergency Operations Manual

1. Include both service and internal plans

2. Consultation available

B. Exercise your plan at least once in the following 12 months

C. Participate in a local disaster planning body or coalition and/or develop a formal relationship with a planning organization

OVERHEAD: OBJECTIVES (REPRISE)

APPENDIX B

AIRS/NERIN DISASTER TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY

I. Experience

Does your agency have a written emergency operations manual?

Yes_____ No_____

If yes, does your manual cover:

_____business recovery issues such as employee safety and hazard mitigation

_____post-disaster service delivery protocols

_____both

Does your agency have experience working a major disaster/emergency? (Note: A "major" disaster or emergency is one that had a significant impact on your community and which required some time for recovery. It need not have resulted in a presidential disaster declaration.)

Yes_____ No_____

Does your agency now have one or more formal agreements with city, county or state government to provide services following a disaster/emergency?

Yes_____ No_____

Does your agency belong to a community collaborative/consortium which has a specific disaster mission?

Yes_____ No_____

Does your agency have a written protocol for media relations?

Yes_____ No_____

II. Training

Have any of your management staff attended either the AIRS full-day disaster preparedness training or the CAIRS version?

Yes_____ No_____

Have any of your management staff attended a training of at least one day in duration offered by FEMA, your state office of emergency services, or a county or city emergency services office?

Yes_____ No_____

If yes, tell us what agency provided the training and briefly describe the course content.

What do you think are your agency's most pressing training needs in relation to disaster preparedness?

APPENDIX C
MEDIA RELATIONS WORKSHOP AGENDA

I. Introduction

A. This is not a public relations workshop

B. Deals specifically with the question of media relations in a disaster situation - how to avoid a secondary disaster

C. OVERHEAD: "OUR AGENCY IS SKILLED..."

D. The object is to maximize potential favorable media contacts and to control damage from negative media attention

II. What is your job when dealing with the media in a disaster situation?

A. To serve the community by disseminating accurate information

B. To build a positive image of your agency and the human services network you work within or, at least, to minimize negative impacts

III. What is the job of the media [from the perspective of the media]?

A. To increase revenue

1.Primarily by selling advertising

2.Advertising revenue is directly tied to circulation or listener/viewership

B. The job of the media, from the perspective of the media, is not to make you look good or necessarily to be fair

C. OVERHEAD: NEWS VENDOR

1.It is to increase circulation, listenership, and viewership

2.Human interest stories sell

3.Controversy sells

4.Scandal and problems sell

IV. Technical suggestions about dealing with the media

A. You have to respond to every question, but you don't have to answer every question - you can use a question to tell your story

B. OVERHEAD: Q&A

C. Sound bites are a way of life, even in the print media

D. It is your responsibility, not the reporter's to tell your story in complete sound bites

1.Every statement has to stand alone

2.Avoid statements that depend on linkages, "and," "also," "in addition" - these will be edited out

E. If the reporter has to do heavy editing on your story it either will not run, or it won't be your story

V. The media may come to you during a disaster because of good work your agency is doing

A. Your agency is receiving recognition for a specific thing you have done or for overall excellent work

B. Your agency has received a grant, contract, formed a coalition, etc.

C. You may try to get the media there to show what you are doing

VI. Or the media may come because there are potentially damaging questions or allegations about your agency

A. The problem is that things go wrong in disasters

1.It wouldn't be a disaster if bad things were not happening to people

2.No matter how well you have prepared it is possible that you will not be able to handle all the demands on your agency

3.Given these two facts your agency might be pinpointed for criticism

a. People look for scapegoats

b. It is easy to criticize in hindsight decisions made under great pressure

EXAMPLES OF DISASTER STORIES (QUERY PARTICIPANTS)

VII. What do you tell the media when there is a potentially negative story about your agency

A. If you do not have full information say that and say when you will get back to the reporter with more information

1.Then follow up when you say you will

2.Do not try to cover up or be evasive

3.Do not speculate

4.You will get points for acknowledging a problem forthrightly

5.If there is a negative story about your agency and a good chance it will become public it may be wise for you to contact the media, rather than waiting for them to smell blood and come to you

B. If you can’t answer a question at a particular time say so and stick with that position - beware the camel’s nose (if you give a little bit of an answer a good reporter will get you to go further, probably further than you want)

C. OVERHEAD: "I’M SORRY, THERE IS NOTHING..."

D. The "off the record" fallacy - there is no such thing as being off the record

1.If you have a long-standing relationship with a reporter it is possible that s/he may treat some information you provide as off the record, but no guarantee

VIII. Another reason the media might come to you in a disaster is when the event itself is the story and your agency is seen as a source for information

A. This is more likely to happen if you have followed a strategy of maintaining frequent contact with the media in order to establish yourself as a reliable expert in your field

B. Only talk about those aspects of the event where your agency is a good authority

C. If the inquiry is about what other agencies are doing, refer to those other agencies

1.resist the temptation to be a "know it all"

2.a story about another agency that quotes your agency might do more harm than good

3.It will often do your agency great harm in the long run if you publicly criticize another part of the human services network

IX. Being prepared: the pre-event survey

A. Prepare a list of foreseeable questions and your responses

1.What are your agency’s vulnerable points?

2.On what subjects are you seen as the experts?

B. There are no bad questions, only bad answers

X. Who speaks to the media

A. OVERHEAD: SPEAKER

B. Not necessarily your Public Information Officer (PIO)

1.The job of the PIO is to be sure that the agency is prepared to deal with media inquiries

a. Doing the pre-event survey

b. Establishing media relations protocols

c. Preparing the spokesperson using the pre-event survey

d. Deciding (with the Executive Director) what are the one or two main points you want people to remember from the story

1. You may not have the opportunity to tell a full story

2. Do you need volunteers? Want to disseminate your hotline number?

3. Sometimes the line staff person who is closest to the actual work the media is inquiring about is the best one to speak to them

a. Front line staff can often provide the liveliest, most accurate description of what the agency is doing at the point of contact with the public

1. It empowers staff to be trusted to speak to the media

2. There need to be clear guidelines - line staff should only talk about what they are doing, not about agency policy, history, etc.

b. Comparison of the difference between how the Army and the Marines handled the media during the Gulf War

1. Army tightly controlled media, kept them away from front line soldiers

2. Army's media relations themselves become a negative news story

3. The Marines allowed media to go to front lines and speak to individuals

a. Line personnel complained about food, sand, etc. but this was seen as standard military griping

b. They came across as committed and prepared

4. Media projected a much more positive image of the Marines

4. If the question is about what the agency policy or overall agency work then the appropriate manager or PIO should handle it

C. The Executive Director may not be the best spokesperson for the agency in a potentially damaging situation

1. Consider that the President will often use a spokesperson or cabinet member for media relations

2. Whether or not to use the ED requires an analysis of the specific situation and of your agency resources

a. In some organizations the ED is so closely associated with the agency in people's minds that damage to the ED's reputation can be very destructive for the organization long-term

1. In that situation you might have someone else speak for the organization in the early, confused stages of the story

2. When the story is about to be wrapped up and you can announce positive steps that are being taken to rectify a problem, or demonstrate that there is no problem, the ED can speak for the agency with the voice of authority

b. However, whoever speaks for the agency must have credibility

D. The ED should probably be the one to announce good news, e.g. a new program, successful grant application

OVERHEAD: SPEAKER AT LECTERN

XI. When do you speak to the media?

A. When they contact you, you must respond (within reason and even if you do not have an answer for them)

B. When you have good news you contact them

1.But don’t trust that they will stick to the subject you want to talk about, or give it the spin you desire

XII. Confidentiality issues

A. OVERHEAD: "CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES"

B. Do you let the media film your specialists?

1.On the one hand disruption of work and showing identity of specialists

2.On the other, publicity value of this

C. Do you let the media listen as you handle calls?

1.Need to protect clients’ identity

2.Good publicity value

D. Do specialists give their real names?

1.Possible danger from a disgruntled client

2.Can give the choice of a pseudonym

APPENDIX D

Pre-Disaster Resource Classifications Specific to Potential and Developing Disaster Concerns:

1.Disaster Information Hotlines

2.Disaster Preparedness Education - Brush Fire Preparedness

3.Earthquake Safety

4.Flood Safety

5.Hurricane Preparedness

6.Nuclear Disaster Preparedness

7.Tornado Safety

8.Volcanic Eruption

9.Winter Storm Safety

10.Disaster Transportation Emergency Transport Vehicles

Evacuation Routes

Road Closures

Emergency Pickup

Sites

High Tide Information

11.Property Damage Protection Home Evaluation/inspection

Mitigation Education

Plywood

Reseeding Service

Sand Bags

Window Boarding

Services

12.People With Special Needs Registry

13.Pre-Disaster Shelters

14.School Closings

15.Weather Warning/Updates

APPENDIX E

NERIN External Relations Sub-Group Report

Task: To provide protocol for developing external relationships with other organizations in preparation for disaster, and to develop training for the outreach/community organizing process involved.

I. Why the Community I&R provider should be involved in community planning for disaster:

A. You will be receiving the calls anyway.

B. Preparedness places your community in the position of maximizing response and effectiveness.)

C. Operating alone diminishes ability to effectively gauge priorities.

D. Coordinated efforts will be more effective when pre-planned & drilled

E. Provide a service to the community (within your mission).

F. Increased visibility.

G. Possible funding opportunities and/or reimbursement.

H. After the disaster, the community must become self-sufficient again, the I&R will know who can provide what for the recovery process.

II. What is your role?

A. I&R providers know the resources available in the community year round; existing database of information; understand the community, neighborhoods and how services work. There is a stake in the existence of an effective human services delivery system beyond our own agency.

1. Convenor, Facilitator, Resource information provider, Translator on how to access services.

B. Working in crisis situations is part of the I&R responsibilities

1. Limited need for additional training - can assist in training.

C. If you are a 24-hour provider, you are already linked with the community after hour emergency response: fire, police, hospital, and helpline.

1. You have knowledge of response and rescue operations – you know where to fit in during a disaster.

D. I&R providers know how to gather and disseminate information quickly, they are used to a changing flow of resources. We know the players in the community, probably better than anyone else.

1. Be the conduit for the flow of resource information during the disaster.

2. Can prepare resource documents quickly, cleanly and concisely. Easy for others to understand.

E. Recognized numbers for assistance in community.

1. Eliminate need to establish a new number.

F. Local language abilities.

1. Can provide information on resources to those populations normally needing services in languages other than English.

III. Getting Started - Community Organizing.

It is essential to ascertain who is already doing what in your community. There may, in some communities, exist some conflict or competitiveness in providing services. How services are provided locally for local disaster is and will be generally defined by the community. However, when the President has declared an area a Federally Declared Disaster Site, the American Red Cross is assigned responsibility for the federal coordination of mass care services and as FEMA's voluntary agency liaison. This document will review who the disaster players normally are in a community, how to reach and interact with them, and finally, if there is a need, how to convene and begin making the necessary cooperative agreements.

A. Who is involved in disaster response, relief and recovery?

1. The American Red Cross (ARC) - the first place to start. In many communities, they coordinate volunteer efforts to provide relief during times of disaster. In some communities they convene VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Assisting in Disasters). It is very important to ascertain if there is currently an active VOAD in your community. The ARC has a regional position called a VOLAG (Voluntary Agency Liaison). This person is the designated person for establishing relationships with local and regional community based organizations. See Section V. for additional information on national and regional contacts for the American Red Cross.

2. The Salvation Army - while they do not have the mandate the American Red Cross has to provide relief during a disaster, this organization is very active in their response. They often augment the efforts provided by ARC. See Section V for additional information on national and regional contacts.

3. VOAD - the Voluntary Organizations Assisting in Disasters. If a VOAD already exists, it may have a number of Memorandums of Agreement in place and it could facilitate your joining the disaster response/recovery efforts. Special note: In some communities and states, membership to VOAD is strictly monitored. Only the local affiliates of National VOAD members are allowed to vote and sometimes, to attend. The good news is that AIRS has applied to become an affiliate member. However, the NVOAD is now strongly encouraging local VOADs to include local agencies in their planning meetings. The list of national affiliates is included in Section V. You may want to check through the list and establish a local contact.

4. Local Emergency Management - this can be a full-time position or positions or a volunteer, depending on the size of community and the propensity for disasters in certain areas of the country. This is the person or entity designated to provide the lead during the emergency response to a disaster. Their job is to secure the safety of the populace, to get people to shelter, to hospitals, to control traffic and to provide emergency fire and rescue services. This may be in a city planning department, a county commissioner's office, a volunteer fire department chief, or the director of a local EMS provider. The ARC is usually a good local source of information. However, the NERIN committee will be gathering regional and state information and the State Emergency Management will invariably be able to assist you in locating your municipal emergency management representative.

5. FEMA - the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This is the governmental entity that moves in to provide a variety of services after the President of the United States has declared an area to be a disaster. This essential makes that community eligible for disaster relief and recovery funds. The services can include temporary shelter moneys, lost wages, money for re-building, hazard mitigation, and community organizing to prepare for the sometimes long recovery process, which is ultimately left to the community. FEMA also has a Voluntary Agency Liaison. It is very helpful to get to know this person during "peacetime". See Section V for additional information on national and regional contacts.

6. Church ministries - many religious groups have a commitment to serve their communities in times of disasters. Their national office may have already established written agreements with ARC and be members of NVOAD. If an Interfaith Ministry group exists in the community, they may also have begun preparation for cooperative service during times of disasters. Note: Local congregations may not be aware of the role their national office may be playing in response to a disaster.

7. The United Way - in some communities the United Way has served as the convenor and/or facilitator of community groups gathering together for the purpose of providing assistance to their community following a disaster. The United Way can frequently bring a number of agencies together to plan and prepare for the coordination of service provision.

8. Food Banks - many areas have large food banks which serve as the distribution point for Second Harvest donations and other large food distributors for pantries. During times of disasters, these organizations are well poised to accept and distribute large quantities of food to community pantries.

9. Gifts In Kind Programs - your community may already have an organization that receive and distributes donated clothing, furniture, office supplies and equipment. During times of disaster, large corporations may be available to donate office equipment and other essential technology. A program like Gifts In Kind can provide a framework for fair and equable distribution of donated goods to qualified organizations during a disaster.

10. Media - the media can be an effective tool, or an additional disaster. Making prior contacts with the media to inform them of your role in relationship with other disaster providers can make a critical difference. It is suggested that your agency be very clear about what information is appropriate for you to discuss and which would be better to refer to other disaster service agencies. The ARC provides training in public affairs during a disaster. Assisting them to be aware of how disaster response, relief and recovery works, prior to a disaster, is key and helping them to prepare for media messages that will strengthen the community response rather than burden helping agencies unnecessarily is also a goal.

11. Military - the military can play many roles during a disaster. In some cases, they may be asked to provide assistance in law enforcement, but most times, they assist in providing mass feeding and shelter operations. They are present to assist in traffic and looting control, as well as special rescue efforts. It is very helpful to have the local representatives know about your organization. You may need to be able to gain access to some areas that are not open to the public in order to perform your work.

12. Disability and Special Needs Community – Includes people who need special or additional considerations during an emergency situation (such as an evacuation) due to physical, emotional, mental or sensory impairments. Also included in this category are the frail elderly and people who are health impaired (dialysis patients) and require the use of oxygen, respirators, tubes for feeding, or other technology or life-

sustaining equipment or are dependent upon another adult for independent living. Recent postoperative patients (residing at home) may also be included in this category.

If any of your clients fit the above description, they may not be able to go to a Red Cross Shelter. The Red Cross will work with agencies who are special needs care providers, but cannot be responsible for those persons with special medical, dietary or other special needs. Ultimate responsibility for caregiving to special needs populations rests with the providers or caregivers of those clients. When a person is served by more than one agency, a determination as to who will take responsibility for that person in times of disaster should be in the care plan. The objective is to allow the caregivers to do their normal jobs in a disaster environment so that special needs groups have their needs met appropriately during emergency management disaster response and recovery efforts. Contact the Red Cross or local disaster representatives in your area prior to a disaster to inquire about arrangements for your clients. All clients should have an individual support plan which includes medical, emotional, behavioral and physical needs such as who is responsible for each client; who to contact (family member) about the relocation; medications required; special diets, allergies and other special notations. Some clients tend to get highly agitated, very emotional or unruly when their routine and surroundings are changed. All of this information should follow the client so that whoever is responsible for the care of the client is well informed about the needs of this person. It is imperative that the location to which people are moved is readily available to release to family members or other significant caregivers.

Each agency or provider that serves clients with special needs should have an emergency plan in place. Many agencies are mandated (all state agencies are mandated) to have such plans and funding could be jeopardized if such plans are not in place and routinely reviewed and rehearsed with staff. Several suggestions of types of agencies to contact prior to a disaster to review their emergency plan include the lead agencies in your area that serve people who are: Deaf, Blind, Mentally Retarded, Mentally Ill, Elderly (including Alzheimer’s patients), Autistic, Head Injured, Physically Impaired, Health Impaired, etc. The plan should not only contain pre-disaster information such as evacuation and relocation information but also information about the recovery phase.

Special Needs Populations During Disasters: Suggestions to Consider

When disseminating information, whether verbally or in print, always use people first language.

Ask your state emergency preparedness division for a copy of the state recovery plan. Review the plan and talk to agency personnel who work with persons with disabilities and the elderly to determine where you need to start planning efforts in your state.

Establish a Special Needs Task Force to make recommendations to state agencies, local service providers and local emergency preparedness organizations about planning and responding to the requirements of persons with special needs before, during and after disasters. The Special Needs Task Force should be established on a local level with a state level coordinator. The functions of the task force may include:

1) providing state leadership and making policy recommendations to appropriate entities to improve planning for and response to persons with special needs
2) coordinating activities of all providers who serve persons with special needs
3) assisting communities to understand and be able to better serve persons with special needs by providing relevant information and by sponsoring and facilitating educational and training opportunities for service providers and other community leaders, especially those that will be involved during disasters
4) advocating for persons with special needs
5) developing public and private resources to address these needs

Members of the local Special Needs Task Force should include representatives from the Health Dept., Social Services, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Nursing Homes, Adult Day Care Centers, County and Private Ambulance Services, Dialysis Centers, Hospitals and any agency or organization that is disability specific.

Developing a Local Special Needs Task Force, prior to a disaster, is vitally important in addressing the needs of anybody with a special need. It is too late to address these needs once there is the threat of disaster or a disaster has already occurred. Addressing these needs pre-disaster will lessen the confusion and insure the safety of all citizens at the local level.

Shelters that are accessible, not only to gain entrance to but that also have accessible showers, restrooms, phones, etc.

Shelter staff and volunteers may want to take a course in mobility orientation.

Accommodations for assistance animals (hearing ear, seeing eye and mobility dogs, and monkeys).

Ensure that TDD’s (telecommunication device for the deaf) and phones with volume controls are readily available and accessible in shelters, I&R centers, emergency agencies.

All Emergency Broadcasts should be voice and closed-captioned. For people who are visually impaired or illiterate, flashing information on the bottom of the TV screen is of no use. The radio reading service in each state routinely transmits over a subchannel; however, a special radio receiver is needed to receive the message. These are usually free from the state agency that serves persons who are blind.

Central voluntary registry (on local level) so that persons needing assistance will be targeted quickly. Collaboration among agencies, to serve those in the community that are not part of the system, is essential. A huge public awareness campaign (should be on-going and checked routinely) will be necessary to establish and maintain the registry. This is mainly for those who are not connected in the service delivery system. Registration forms could be included in Social Security and disability checks, utility bills, newspapers, etc. Aging and Disability groups could distribute the forms. Indicate what the special needs are and what type assistance would be needed, i.e. accessible transportation.

Daycares that are willing to accept children with special needs while the parents are trying to recover.

Work with your local and state Department of Health to invoke a plan for their nurses to assist in disasters. Nurses should be self-sufficient when they arrive at the disaster site. This includes RV’s with medical supplies, food and water so as not to drain existing resources.

Prepare checklists and an audiotape of what you may need and other helpful hints to distribute to persons with disabilities and elderly as part of community education.

Establish a contingency plan for emergency medications.

How will this be monitored?

Coordinate with local school Spanish teachers, University Language Departments, etc., to interpret during the recovery phase of the disaster. This can be done with any language.

Suggestion for Industry Change

Make TDD’s available with battery backups

Have port-a-johns that are accommodating to persons using wheelchairs

There should be some type of alerting device (flashing light, etc.) on TV that notifies a person with a hearing impairment that a special broadcast is about to begin so they can read the message as it appears on the screen

IV. How to start establishing the necessary relationships.

First, it is important to assess what your I&R Team can realistically do during and following a disaster. It is highly recommended that your organization develop an agency disaster mission. Training to prepare your agency for a disaster is available at AIRS Conferences and CAIRS has developed a certification process that includes an extensive training component. FEMA and the ARC also provide training regionally and locally. This will better prepare you to begin to establish the necessary relationships. Several options are available to you, to contact each individual agency or to call a town meeting. You may already have a regular networking meeting of health and human services. You could work with your local United Way to facilitate a meeting of their agencies and invite other pertinent members. You may want to consider having a neutral facilitator present and keep your eyes out for an agency that may emerge as a possible leader for the group. Every time you talk with an agency, be sure to ask who they think should be involved. Here are a few more suggestions:

A. Contact AIRS and have an I&R, which has experienced a large-scale disaster, work with you to determine how to best approach the various agencies.

B. Contact the ARC and request their introductory training on disasters. This prepares you and your staff for any other training that may be available through the ARC. After the training, let them know about your services and where you think you might fit in.

C. Contact your local Emergency Management entity, meet with them and explain how you think you might fit it. This group is frequently involved with the Emergency Relief and Response aspects of a disaster, and may want to see you as a 911 replacement. It may be helpful to invite them to your office to see what you do. It will be important to understand how this group is trained before approaching them; they use specific terminology to express their roles during a disaster. InfoLine of Los Angeles, Switchboard of

Miami, the United Way in Houston and the Northern California Disaster Preparedness Network can all be helpful on preparing you for this contact. Training with the ARC also helps you to understand the roles and terminology utilized.

D. Who and what kind of services will be needed following a disaster that you may know how to contact. This is generally where the I&R becomes very important because your organization has knowledge of the existing framework of the following services:

- Food, clothing, furniture, transportation, storage, donated goods
- Housing, homeless services, building and repair
- Family assistance
- Special populations (disabled)/volunteers
- Information & referral/legal aid
- Communications
- Mental Health/Physical Health
- Health services/RX services
- Animal/pet control services
- Media

E. Statements of Understanding/Memorandums of Agreement - these are contracts that state relationships. These are helpful in establishing more formal relationships with agencies, especially with the ARC and Emergency Management. Disaster areas are highly sensitive areas and many times only personnel who are known or approved can enter or provide services. This includes places where vital information is being compiled and disseminated. Having access to the information, such as traffic, road closures, shelter locations, food distribution are critical to the community and if you are the I&R that normally provides information on food and shelter you will be receiving these calls. Having prior agreements to gain access to that information expedites the dissemination of the information.

V. National relationships and protocol.

AIRS will begin this year to maintain a National database of information on regional contacts for the following:

A. AIRS members which have experience and training with establishment of relationships with disaster serving agencies and organizations. The NERIN members will be responsible for providing regional information on contacts.

B. American Red Cross - the American Red Cross has a national charter to provide disaster relief services. This generally means that they are the lead agency and you should work in cooperation with them. They will send in volunteers and staff from all over the United States to assist in a large-scale disaster. The personnel sent to a large-scale disaster will always have previous experience in working on this scale. The names of the ARC Special Representatives to FEMA and the service delivery unites responsible for coordinating disaster response are listed.

C. National VOAD members and their regional contacts (pending).

- Adventist Community Services
- Catholic Charities USA
- Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter day Saints
- Church of the Brethren
- Church World Services
- Methodist Disaster Relief
- Inter-Lutheran Disaster Response
- Southern Baptist Mission Board
- International Relief Friendship Foundation
- Mennonite Disaster Services
- Points of Light Foundation
- The Salvation Army
- Second Harvest Society of St. Vincent de Paul
- Gifts In Kind of America

D. United Ways in the country that are involved in disaster planning.

VI. What already exists in cooperative assistance? State and local models.

A. California - California has passed legislation required cooperative coordination in responding to large-scale disasters, their system is called S.E.M.S. Both Los Angeles and San Francisco have excellent models that include I & R. The advantages of SEMS are:

1. Creates a common terminology and structure for the community
2. Coordinates large areas which may include several municipalities and school districts
3. Facilitates the flow of information and resources between agencies involved.
4. Allows for the rapid mobilization, deployment, use and tracking of resources
5. It is required by local jurisdictions to receive state reimbursement for personnel expenses in a disaster.

B. Miami - While California has a state mandated system in place, not all states require such. However, some communities, such as Miami, where the threat of a large-scale disaster is imminent, have taken the initiative and created their own. The Switchboard of Miami has played a key role in convening and facilitating disaster preparedness for their community. They function through the effectiveness of their VOAD group and a series of Statements of Understanding (SOU) or Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) with the American Red Cross and local and state Emergency Management, as well as with CBO's for exchange of information during the disaster. They will be the primary providers of information and referral during and after a large-scale disaster. They will co-locate to the Emergency Management facility to provide this service along with the other essential community services.

C. Houston - The United Way Helpline in Houston has a MOA with the American Red Cross to assume responsibility for answering their phones for the 8 hours prior to landfall of a large hurricane and 72 hours following any large scale disaster. The ARC is the focus of assistance in the Houston area and the Helpline staff will relocate to the ARC response facility, maintain, update and disseminate the changing resource information. They are also responsible year round for maintaining an up to date list of local and regional contacts for disaster relief and recovery services.

D. Oklahoma City - the United Way of Metropolitan Oklahoma City spearheaded an effort on behalf of the Governor of Oklahoma to track utilization of services following the bombing incident in April 1995. A cooperative effort to share essential service access information has been very successful with over 40 agencies linked to a single network housed at the United Way offices. These agencies include Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, local counseling groups, the American Red Cross, CONTACT (I&R) and many others. The system was set-up through donations by the UWA and Gifts In Kind of America. It was designed to insure the bombing victims and their family members were offered and had access to the funds and services available in the community.

E. Others

VII. Unmet Needs Committees

These are convened following a disaster, and in many communities are responsible for the long term recovery planning and implementation. The mandates which govern the ARC and local municipalities usually only exist for the emergency response and relief. Recovery is the bailiwick of the community. However, the ARC and FEMA have personnel that are trained to help start this process prior to pulling out their personnel. These are individual to each community and certainly to each disaster - the following is an overview of groups that have been helpful in the long-term recovery process.

- I&R - they know what resources exist in the community year round
- ARC - they sometimes have funds to assist in recovery
- Salvation Army - they also have funds and personnel
- Ministries - these are the groups that assist in building materials, work crews to clean up debris and repair structures, provide meals, day care and casework
- Youth organizations - see above
- United Way - may have special funds and facilitating/convenor services
- Volunteer Center - assist in organizing volunteer efforts
- Foundation representatives - funds to assist in purchases of appliances
- Legal Services - to assist citizens with building contracts/purchase of goods
- Disabled Services - representatives to assist this group who is historically underserved.

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APPENDIX F

Internal Operations Sub-Group Report

Task: To provide protocols for the relationships and roles between the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) and the current NERIN project participants, and the NERIN project and the greater I&R community.

The following protocols were identified between The Alliance of information and Referral Systems (AIRS) and the current NERIN participants:

1) AIRS has the ultimate responsibility for the NERDQ project and the AIRS Executive Committee must sign off on all decisions that have a direct impact on the ability to complete the grant project on time and within budget.

2) Questions related to the ways and means of completing the project and its sub-pieces are to be resolved by the NERIN project, through the Project Director and the internal Relations Committee.

3) If there are questions about whether an issue falls under point one or two above, the decision wiIl be made by the AIRS Board President.

4) Each NERIN partner must have a clear and binding contract on file with the Project Director.

5) The NERIN partners are agencies, not individuals.

6) In the case of noncompliance with contract terms, responsibility for correction falls to the Project Director. This task may be delegated to the Project Coordinator.

7) The Project Director and Coordinator have the right to re-negotiate a time commitment with a partner, with permission of the other partners affected and providing that the product will be delivered by the end of the grant period.

8) In the case of noncompliance with a target date that goes beyond seven days, the Project Director has the right to reassign the responsibility and the compensation that correlated to that responsibility. The Project Director may utilize a "Request for Proposal" process in making the assignment.

The following protocols were identified between the NERIN project and the greater I&R community:

1. AIRS will implement a national voluntary mutual aid agreement its members.
2. If conflict occurs between local I&R's and/or between local I&R's and other disaster response agencies, the Project Director will attempt to resolve the conflict through mediation.
3. If there are multiple NERIN accredited I&R's in a community, all of these will be cited as I&R contacts in the resource information shared with other disaster response agencies, i.e., FEMA, American Red Cross.

APPENDIX G

Information and Referral Services Requested after a Disaster

The following is a list of possible categories needed in the aftermath of a community-wide disaster.

Bathing Facilities
Clothing
Commodities Replacement
Emergency Food; Congregate Meals; Mobile Canteens
Grocery Stores
House Hold Items - Furniture, Appliances, and Bedding
Ice
Infant Care Items
Personal Care/Hygiene
Water

Building/Repair Building Evaluation
- Building Materials
- Chain Saws (Tools)
- Hardware Stores
- House Reconstruction
- House Repair
- Roofing

Cleanup Efforts
- Clean up Supplies
- Debris Removal
- Laundry

Communications
- HAM Radios
- Mail
- Phone

Disaster Response Closed Areas

Coordination Groups

- Corporate Response
- Curfews
- Donations
- Information & Referrals
- Needs Assessment
- Trade/Merchant Associations
- Response
- Volunteers

Emergency Services. - Disaster Dogs

- Fire
- Missing Persons
- Police
- Rescue

Family Services - Case Management

- Child Care
- Respite Care

Government Services

- Animal Lost and Found
- Civil Defense
- County/City Government Offices
- Emergency Operations Centers
- Federal Government Offices
- Military
- National Guard
- State Government Offices

Health/Medical - Field Hospitals
Hospitals
Medical Supplies
Special Assistance Notification
Services (power failure respirators)
Special Conditions (Asthma, Diabetes, HlV, etc.)
Temporary Pharmacies
Veterinarian Services

Housing Apartment/Housing Database
Home Sharing/Roommate Services
Shelters
Temporary Housing -
Tent Cities

Legal - Certificates/Document Replacement
Consumer Protection
Contractor Fraud
Insurance Complaint
Laws covering Contractors
Laws covering Disaster Response
Property Values Reassessment

Mental Health Community Mental Health Centers
Disaster Victim Counseling
Domestic Violence Counseling
Support Groups (PTSD, etc.)

Money/Financial - American Red Cross
Banks (ATM/open)
DACs
Disaster Loans
Employment Assistance

FEMA
Financial Assistance
Insurance
Rules for Applying for FEMA, SEA, etc.
Small Business Administration

Transportation Bus Service
Disaster Transportation
Gas Stations
Medical Transportation
Road Conditions

Utilities Electric
Emergency Generators
Gas
Water

APPENDIX H
NVOAD members

Adventist Community Services

American Radio Relay League

American Red Cross

Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team

Catholic Charities USA

Christian Disaster Response

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee

Church Of The Brethren

Church World Service

CJF-UJA Partnership

The Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief

Friends Disaster Service

International Relief Friendship Foundation

Lutheran Disaster Response

Mennonite Disaster Services

National Emergency Response Team

National Organization for Victim Assistance

Nazarene Disaster Response

Northwest Medical Teams International

The Phoenix Society For Burn Survivors

The Points of Light Foundation

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

REACT International

The Salvation Army

Second Harvest

Society of St. Vincent De Paul

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief

United Methodist Committee on Relief

United States Service Command

Volunteers of America

World Vision

APPENDIX I

THE NERIN EXERCISE FOR APRIL 21, 1997