Disaster Plan

for Community Organisations

This Disaster Plan Template is a resource from the   
***Resilient Community Organisations*** website (<http://resilience.acoss.org.au>).

It is a starting point for community organisations developing a Disaster Plan.

Complete the Template or cut and paste it into your organisation’s existing documentation.

The Disaster Plan uses the same structure as the Six Steps in the website:

Step 1: Leadership  
Step 2: Building networks   
Step 3: Know your risks  
Step 4: Manage your risks  
Step 5: Preparing others

Step 6: Learn and improve

***Resilient Community Organisations*** is a toolkit developed by and for the community sector to help organisations measure and improve their **resilience to disasters and emergencies.** The Toolkit includes:

* A benchmarking tool so organisations can assess their current state of **preparedness for disasters and emergencies** and identify areas of improvement
* **Six Steps to Disaster Resilience,** which provides information and resources organisations need to take action.
* **Disaster Plan template (this document).**

**Website content**

Text in these text boxes is from *the Resilient Community Organisations* website.  
Go to the web site more for ideas: <http://resilience.acoss.org.au>

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*[Insert your organisation logo here]*

*[Your Name]*

*[Your Title]*

*[Organisation Name]*

*[Organisation Address]*

*ABN: [ABN]*

Disaster Plan

for Community Organisations

**Implemented:** *[Date]*

**Revision History:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version Number** | **Changes made** | **Person Responsible** | **Date Updated** |
| *[e.g. Version 1.0]* | *[Description of any changes and why they were made]* | *[e.g. J Smith]* | *[Date]* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

1. Leading organisational preparedness for disasters and emergencies

**STEP 1: Introduction**

Developing disaster resilience requires strong leadership.

Communities and community organisations that can ‘bounce back’ from disasters and emergencies are important. Organisations that are not well-prepared will not be able to support their clients and communities to recover.

Community organisations are generally not well prepared for disasters and emergencies and so it is particularly important that the leadership of community organisations steps up to the role of leading their organisation's disaster preparedness.

When Step 1 is complete your organisation will:

1. Understand the difference between emergencies and disasters
2. Understand the emergency management cycle: prevention, preparedness, response & recovery
3. Created a mandate for action on disaster resilience in your organisations and specific goals to be achieved.

# a) Preparedness is a priority: mandate for action

## Introduction

*[Every year communities across Australia are subjected to the damaging impacts of disasters and emergencies. The effects of these events on people experiencing disadvantage and the organisations who work with them serve as a reminder of our need to continuously strengthen our resilience.*

*Building the preparedness of our organisation for disasters and emergencies is a priority because we are committed to delivering vital \_\_\_\_\_ services to our community. Our clients are \_\_\_\_\_\_ and our services extend to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ areas.*

*We recognise that if our organisation is put under strain or ceases operation because of an emergency our clients will be impacted. They will lose important services just at the time when they themselves may be suffering acute difficulty because of the emergency.*

*Though disasters and emergencies may be infrequent, our services are especially important before, during and after an emergency because many of our clients are beyond the reach of other services; we provide an essential lifeline of support. Furthermore, we appreciate that climate change will make extreme weather events more severe and more frequent.*

*We therefore recognise that preparedness for disasters and emergencies is a priority for us and our clients.]*

# b) Statement of approach

Our approach follows the Resilient Community Organisations framework provided by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). The framework is designed to address organisational risks arising from disasters and emergencies, and where relevant, the impacts of climate change.

The Resilient Community Organisations framework incorporates a risk management approach in line with the Australian/New Zealand Standard ISO 31000. The framework is based upon a 2014 international ACOSS review of resilience tools available to the community sector.

Using the **Resilient Community Organisations Framework** our organisation will build its resilience through completing the following 6 steps:

1. Leading Resilience
2. Building Networks
3. Knowing Risk
4. Managing Risk
5. Preparing Others
6. Learning and Inspiring

# c) Objectives and Scope

The goals of our organisational resilience plan are:

1. *[We can provide an adequate level of service to our clients before, during and after an emergency*
2. *Our clients are supported to build their resilience by preparing for emergencies*
3. *Our staff and volunteers are well prepared to cope with an emergency*
4. *Through strengthening our organisation’s disaster resilience, we strengthen the resilience of our whole community*
5. *Our organisation is well positioned to work with our community to ‘build back better’ after an emergency]*

**Endorsed by the Board/CEO:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# d) Context

*[Provide an overview of your organisation’s operational context. Consider the following:*

* *Which of your services are dependent upon other organisations or businesses? (for example suppliers of critical items such as food if you provide meals to clients)*
* *Which services do you provide that no other organisation provides in your community?*
* *Which personnel are critical in the delivery of your essential services?*
* *How would your clients or beneficiaries be impacted by your inability to deliver services?*
* *What laws, rules, regulations or standards apply to your organisation?*
* *What work is already being undertaken to manage risk?]*

# e) Disaster Resilience Team

All staff and volunteers are involved in our resilience activities as we understand that a whole of organisation approach is essential to building our organisational resilience.

Key people will be involved in overseeing, managing and implementing our disaster resilience project, as listed in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** | **Resilience Role** | **Responsibilities** | **Contact Details** |
| *[Name]* | *[Job title]* | *[Role in resilience building activities]* | *[List of responsibilities e.g. coordinate workshops, research risks]* | *[phone and email]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

2. Building Networks

**STEP 2: Introduction**

Being disaster resilient means being linked with local networks. Networks must include emergency services and community organisations. People who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of disasters need to be linked to these networks. Effective networks can:

Share expertise and knowledge  
Build better local emergency management plans  
Enable collaboration and coordination in planning for and responding to disasters and emergencies

When Step 2 is complete your organisation will:

1. Be aware of what the community sector brings to disaster resilience
2. Be aware of who’s who in emergency management and be networked with relevant organisations
3. Be networked with other community organisations in your local area in relation to disasters and emergencies
4. Be confident that vulnerable clients are effectively linked to the networks.

We understand that we have an important contribution to make in the community to improve our own and the community’s disaster resilience and that effective relationships with emergency services and other community service organisations in our area will help us before, during and after an emergency. They are a vital source of information and expertise that can be used to inform our resilience activities. It is also through collaboration and coordination that we are able to deliver quality services and support to our community.

Local government plays an important role and will have emergency management plans and personnel with designated roles during an emergency. They work closely with emergency service organisations. Local government is the best starting point for finding out about local emergency management arrangements and the terminology used to describe them in our state or territory and local government area.

# a) Local emergency management arrangements

*[The body responsible for emergency management planning for our local area or region is …]*

# b) Local emergency management plan

*[Our local emergency management plan can be access at …]*

# c) Emergency service organisations

Emergency service organisations such as the police, fire brigade, State Emergency Services (SES), the Country Fire Authority and ambulance services have clearly defined responsibilities and different agencies will take the lead in an emergency depending on the type of hazard being addressed. Local councils and some non-government organisations, including the Australian Red Cross and the Salvation Army, also have a formal role in disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities.

We are networked with emergency service organisations, local government and non-government organisations in our local area.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Key Contact** | **Date of last meeting** | **Meeting Description and Frequency** | **Person Responsible** |
| *[Name of organisation e.g. Fire Brigade, Police, SES, Local Council]* | *[Name; contact details]* | *[Date]* | *[Name of meeting if applicable and the frequency it occurs e.g. local psychosocial emergency recovery committee meeting; quarterly]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for this relationship]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# d) Community service organisations

A small number of key community organisations (e.g. Red Cross) have a formal role in emergency management planning and processes, however many do not.

Community organisations can play a vital role in helping their communities prepare and recover from emergencies at the national state and local levels.

We are networked with community organisations in our local area to ensure we are well-prepared to deliver services to our clients and the community during and after a disaster or emergency.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Key Contact** | **Date of last meeting** | **Meeting Description and Frequency** | **Person Responsible** |
| *[Name of organisation]* | *[Name; contact details]* | *[Date]* | *[Name of meeting if applicable and the frequency it occurs e.g. WACOSS peaks meeting, quarterly]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for this relationship]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# e) Identifying our vulnerable clients

People who are experiencing poverty and disadvantage will be worst affected by a disaster.

There are different risks for people with in different situations. For example in relation to evacuations:

* Some people may need support to evacuate but at the same time are well connected family, friends or neighbours and have the necessary support available within their networks.
* Other people may need support to evacuate but at the same time are more isolated and will need support from services.

Because community organisations are well connected with people who are experiencing poverty and disadvantage it is important to identify clients who may need supports from services in disaster or emergency.

*[Describe the systems and processes you have in place for identifying vulnerable clients and the actions to be taken in relation to each group.]*

3. Know your Risks

**STEP 3: Introduction**

Being disaster resilient means knowing and understanding the risks your organisation faces. Some starting points for getting to know your risks are researching:

a) Disasters and emergencies that have occurred in your community/area in the past.

b) The impact of previous disasters and emergencies on your organisation and the clients you serve and the local community

c) Disasters and emergencies that may occur in the future that have not occurred in your community/area in the past.

When risks are identified they can be incorporated into a risk management plan and risk register.

If you are new to risk management, you may find the *Introduction to Risk Management* available on the ‘Resources’ page of the Resilient Community Organisations website useful.

When Step 3 is complete your organisation will:

Know and understand your risks in relation to disasters and emergencies.

Important questions to ask when you are researching past situations are:

What was the hazard or the source of potential harm?

What harm happened? How could it have been prevented?

What happened that prevented the hazard from causing harm?

Important questions to ask when you are researching situations that have not yet happened are:

What are likely hazards or sources of potential harm?

What might happen that allows harm to be caused?

What might happen that prevents the hazard from causing harm?

# a) The disasters and emergencies our organisation may face

*[List the hazards that have caused or may cause disasters or emergencies in your area.]*

1. *Flood*
2. *Fire*
3. *Heatwave*
4. *Snow*
5. *Storms or cyclones*
6. *Pandemic*
7. *Other*

# b) Finding your risks

The disasters and emergencies that have affected our organisations in the past include:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Hazard** | **Date** | **What harm was caused and why?** |
| **1** |  |  |  |
| **2** |  |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |  |

The disasters and emergencies that may affect our organisation in the future (including as a result of climate change) include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Hazard** | **What harm might be caused?** |
| **1** |  |  |
| **2** |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |

***NOTE:*** *Include here your broad findings about hazards and harm or possible harm caused. The detailed description of all of the risks you identify, their likelihood and consequences and the actions you can take to reduce harm can be included in the Risk Register in Step 4.*

4. Manage your risks

**STEP 4: Introduction**

Being disaster resilient means effectively managing your risks.

There are very practical ways that organisations manage risks. While each organisation and the risks to be managed may be different it is useful to have a plan for disasters and emergencies, which includes:

This Step highlights some of the core elements of a Disaster Plan, including:

* Prevention and adaption strategies
* Risk Register
* Business Continuity Plan
* Insurance
* Preparing for recovery
* Disaster and emergency policies and procedures
* Triggers

When Step 4 is complete, your organisation will have written a Disaster Resilience Plan that includes all of the Six Steps to Disaster Resilience.

# Prevention and adaption strategies

*[Review the tables of past and possible future disasters and emergencies you completed in Step 3 and identify actions that your organisation took or could take to reduce the harm caused by the disaster or emergency. You may find it helpful to review the scenario examples presented in Step 4 of the Six Steps to Disaster Resilience on the Resilient Community Organisations website.]*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Hazard** | **Harm** | **Strategy to reduce harm** |
| **1** |  |  |  |
| **2** |  |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |  |

# b) Risk register

**A Risk Register** is a document you use to record:

1. All of your organisation’s identified risks
2. The likelihood and consequences of a risk occurring,
3. The actions you are undertaking to reduce those risks and
4. Who is responsible for managing them?

It’s one part of risk management: the practice of identifying potential risks in advance, analysing them and taking precautionary steps to reduce/minimise the risk or potential impacts.

The Risk Register is essential for keeping track of all the risks, your analysis of them, what you intend to do about them, and so on.

Many organisations already have risk management processes and risk registers.

If you have an existing risk management process and risk register we suggest you embed all the risks in relation to disasters and emergencies in those processes and risk register.

If you do not already have a risk register there are a range of risk templates available on line. We have created one for you to use in both Word and Excel format. You will find them on the ‘Resources’ page of the Resilient Community Organisations Website.

The Risk Register templates include the following headings:

Risk #

Date

Description of Risk & Risk Source

Risk Consequences

Consequence Rating & Likelihood Rating & Inherent Risk Rating

Existing Controls

Residual Risk Rating

Planned Treatments

Risk Owner

Treatment Due Date

Risk Review Date

***NOTE:*** *If you are unfamiliar with these technical terms you may find the Introduction to Risk Management available on the ‘Resources’ page of the Resilient Community Organisations website useful.*

# c) Business Continuity Plan

Business continuity planning refers to the activities your organisation undertakes to prepare to manage disruptions.

## 1) Critical Services

In case of an emergency these are our pre-identified service priorities. We have developed these priorities based on our organisational strategic goals, the needs of our clients and with consideration of the services provided by other local organisations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Priority** | **Service Area** | **Reason for being a critical service** | **Service requirements** | **Person Responsible** |
| 1 | *[specific type of service provision]* | *[ e.g. this is our organisation’s core business, there are no other orgs providing this type of service in our community, this is the type of service our clients need most because of xyz]* | *[List what you need to be able to deliver this service. E.g. equipment, facilities, personnel, client records]* | *[Name of person who would lead the delivery of this service]* |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |

## 2) Roles and Responsibilities

These are the key roles and responsibilities we will need to fulfilled during and after a disaster or emergency.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Responsibilities** | **Person Responsible** | **Contact Details** | **Back-up** | **Back-up contact details** |
| *[e.g. Coordinator, fire warden, logistics, communications, first aid, finance]* | *[briefly list responsibilities of the role]* | *[name]* | *[email address; work number; after hours/mobile number]* | *[name]* | *[email address; work number; after hours/mobile number]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

## 3) Temporary Accommodation

In the event of our organisation’s premises being unavailable we have identified the following temporary office/service accommodation that can be quickly accessed during and after an emergency. We have consulted with the site managers of these locations to confirm the suitability and availability of these locations.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Address** | **Equipment Available** | **Resources Needed** | **Key Contact** | **Person Responsible** |
| *[e.g. hotel, temporary office]* | *[site address]* | *[document all the equipment available at the site such as beds, computers, phones, paper]* | *[document all the equipment or resources you will need that are not available on site such as staff, specialist equipment, software]* | *[Name and contact details of site manager]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for identifying, securing and maintaining access to site]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

## 4) Data Security and Back-up

Our data is essential to our organisation’s ability to operate effectively which is why we have the following data security, back-up and recovery plan. We test this regularly to ensure that the data can be recovered.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Data for Back-up** | **Type of data** | **Frequency of backup** | **Backup method** | **Person Responsible** | **Recovery Information** |
| *[What are you backing up? E.g. client files, share drive, payroll]* | *[e.g. email, spreadsheets, database]* | *[e.g. monthly, weekly]* | *[how are you backing up your data? e.g. cloud, external hard drive]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for data back-up]* | *[How can this data be retrieved/accessed?]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

## 5) Emergency supplies

We have an Emergency Kit and a stockpile of essentials to enable our organisation to continue operations for \_\_ days/weeks.

*[Document the contents of your emergency kit and essential supplies stockpile.]*

**Emergency Kit**

**Essential Supplies**

# d) Insurance

Insurance is an important risk management option that is sometimes referred to as ‘transferring’ risk. This is because it doesn’t reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring, rather, it transfers the cost of the consequence of the risk to someone else.

## Insurance checklist

There are many types of insurance

Business interruption

Commercial vehicle

Computer and electronic equipment

Deterioration of stock

Employee fraud or dishonesty

Glass

Goods in transit/property in transit insurance

Machinery/Equipment breakdown

Money

Product liability

Professional indemnity/liability

Property

Public liability

Tax audit insurance

Theft and burglary

Workers' Compensation

Some that are particularly relevant in relation to disaster resilience are:

Business interruption

Deterioration of stock

Property

Public liability

## Insurance held

Our organisation holds the following insurance policies

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Insurance Type** | **Policy Coverage** | **Policy Exclusions** | **Insurance Company and Contact Details** | **Last Review Date** | **Person Responsible** |
| *[e.g. Building contents, business interruption]* | *[e.g. fire, cyclone]* | *[e.g. terrorism, tsunami]* | *[ e.g. Name of Insurance Company, key contact person, phone number]* | *[date]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible to managing insurance and ensuring payments are made]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

# e) Preparing for recovery

**Recovery** is the process a community goes through after a disaster or emergency. Recovery is the coordinated process of supporting affected communities in recovery in:

* the social environment
* The built environment
* The economic environment
* the natural environment

Community organisations play a critical role in disaster recovery. For example, during the devastating natural disasters in late 2010 and early 2011, Neighbourhood Centres quickly became places where people gravitated in the spontaneous outpouring of community support for impacted householders. Centres undertook many roles including:

* acting as Community Recovery Centres
* developing and distributing information on local support services
* organising counselling referrals, information and support services
* participating in feedback sessions related to local recovery efforts
* coordinating the distribution of goods and financial donations
* providing household goods, food, fuel or third party payment vouchers
* liaising with regional councils and other key stakeholders regarding post support strategies and
* undertaking future planning activities.

In preparing for recovery some of the areas it is important for community organisations to have plans in place are:

1. Supporting the Supporters
2. Funding
3. Donated goods
4. Spontaneous volunteers

## 1. Supporting the Supporters

Vicarious trauma is a very real and very serious health concern for community service organisations’ staff and volunteers, especially when working with disaster affected individuals and communities.

*[Document the plans you have in place for supporting your workers and volunteers, including leave provisions, emotional support, access to counselling services or an Employee Assistance Program etc.]*

## 2. Funding

Funding is always an issue for the community sector and the post-emergency environment is no different.

*[Document your organisation’s financial capacity with respect to supporting disaster response and recovery activities in your community. For example,*

1. *We have a specific budget for disaster response and recovery activities*
2. *We can you divert $\_\_ amount of existing funds to disaster response and recovery activities*
3. *We have renegotiated our funding contract with the state/territory/commonwealth government agency that provides our funding to secure additional funds for our organisation to engage in disaster response and recovery activities and sufficient flexibility within our funding agreements to ensure that we can respond appropriately to the community’s needs during and after a disaster or emergency.]*

## 3. Donated Goods

In the aftermath of an emergency there may be an outpouring of good will. Whilst this is very heart-warming it can present some challenges to the community organisations who are often required to manage it.

*[Document your organisation’s policy with respect to receiving and distributing donated goods during and after a disaster or emergency.]*

*Identify how you will communicate this policy to the community.]*

## 4. Spontaneous Volunteers

Spontaneous volunteers are people who are not existing volunteers who wish to volunteer to help after an emergency. These volunteers can be a great support in a time of need but they also present some challenges that need to be considered carefully.

*[Document your organisation’s policy with respect to spontaneous volunteers during and after a disaster or emergency.]*

# f) Disaster and emergency policies and procedures

Policies and procedures for disasters and emergencies are essential for every organisation. They provide

* a framework for action (within your organisation)
* decisions grounded in legitimate authority
* written documentation so the organisation can keep track of what’s agreed.
* a starting point for building understanding for everyone in the organisation

The Disaster Plan can itself be a starting point for organisational policies and procedures. Further details may be needed in the organisation’s policy and procedures manuals. Useful polices can include:

1. Organisational mandate for disaster resilience
2. Goals to be achieved in the face of disasters and emergencies
3. Relationships with local emergency management and services and associated processes (committee memberships etc.).
4. Identifying vulnerable clients - processes and systems
5. Staff and volunteer disaster and emergency training
6. Client disaster preparedness

We have implemented the following emergency procedures in line with legislative obligations and best practice. Copies of our evacuation plan, emergency kit contents and contacts list can be found in the attachments.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Procedure** | **Summary** | **Location of full procedure document** | **Person responsible** | **Date last reviewed** |
| *[e.g. contact list, evacuation procedure]* | *[e.g. overview of procedure]* | *[e.g. the evacuation procedure document can be found on the share drive in the ‘Emergency Procedures’ folder. Printed copies are also available at reception. Supporting documentation]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for developing, maintaining and communicating emergency procedure]* | *[Date]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# g) Triggers and key messages identified and communicated

When a hazard occurs, like a fire, flood, heat wave it is essential that everyone knows exactly what to do.

Everyone needs to know:

* When disaster plans come into effect?
* Who does what when the disaster plan is in effect?
* What are the triggers that bring disaster plans into effect?

Some organisations find it useful to have A4 size laminated flip charts that identify for each hazard the triggers and first actions to be taken.

*[Document the events that bring your organisation’s disaster plan into effect, first actions to be taken and the person responsible for that action.]*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Hazard** | **Trigger** | **Action** | **Person Responsible** |
| **1** | *Snow* | *Predicted heavy snowfall for the following day* | *Contact parents and tell them the child care service will be closed* | *Child care service Manager* |
| **2** |  |  |  |  |
| **3** |  |  |  |  |
| **4** |  |  |  |  |

5. Preparing others

**STEP 5: Introduction**

Being disaster resilient means being prepared to help keep people safe and get them back on their feet after a disaster or emergency.

Community organisations are well placed to support clients, staff and volunteers to become more prepared.  There are simple actions you can take now to help people for when they may be at their most vulnerable, during an emergency; a time when you may not be able to support them in the way you usually would. When Step 5 is complete your organisation will:

* Have a plan and relevant strategies in place for preparing clients
* Have plans and strategies in place for preparing staff and volunteers
* Understand what a REDiPlan plan is and who needs one.

It is important that our clients, staff and volunteers are prepared for emergencies. Our clients are our organisation’s reason for being and it wouldn’t operate without our staff and volunteers.

# a) Client preparedness

We acknowledge that our clients may be more adversely impacted by an emergency than other people in our community. We are also aware that our organisation may not be able to provide the same level of services to our clients during and immediately after an emergency. For these reasons it is important that we help our clients to prepare for emergencies.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Client Group** | **Preparedness Action** | **Person Responsible** | **Resources** | **Frequency** |
| *[Which clients are you targeting with this preparedness activity?]* | *[What activity will you undertake? E.g. develop emergency plan with client; create an emergency contact list; compile an emergency kit; run information session; link with early evacuation program]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for ensuring these activities take place]* | *[List the resources required to undertake this activity]* | *[How often will this take place? E.g. all new client assessments, annually, reviewed in every home visit]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

# b) Staff and volunteer preparedness

Our people are our greatest asset and it is vital that they and their loved ones are safe during an emergency. We help our staff and volunteers to prepare for emergencies through the following activities:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Target Audience** | **Preparedness Activity** | **Preparedness Action** | **Person Responsible** | **Resources** | **Frequency** |
| *[Who are you targeting with this activity? E.g. case workers, all staff, volunteers]* | *[What activity will you undertake? E.g. Preparedness information for new staff; workshop for all staff and volunteers; training for particular staff; quarterly reminders]* | *What action will be taken as a result of the activity? E.g. emergency contacts up to date; staff and volunteers have household emergency plans; staff and volunteers have emergency kits]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for ensuring these activities take place]* | *[List the resources required to undertake this activity]* | *[How often will this take place? E.g. all new client assessments, annually, reviewed in every home visit]* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

6. Learn and Improve

**STEP 6: Introduction**

Being disaster resilient means learning and continuously improving our preparedness plans. Building disaster resilience is an ongoing process that requires: updating plans for disasters and emergencies, testing plans and improving plans.

* Updating plans for disasters and emergencies
* Testing your plans as far as you are able
* Improving your plans

A key part of improving plans is being well connected and up to date so it is important to participate in local events that help you and others prepare for disasters and emergencies and to share what you have learned with others

When Step 6 is complete your organisation will:

* Be regularly updating plans for disasters and emergencies
* Testing and improving your plans in so far as you are able and
* Be sharing what you learn with others and also learning from them
* Working together with others in the local community to achieve better disaster resilience.

# a) Testing monitoring and reviewing

This policy and procedure will be tested, reviewed and updated

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Frequency** | **Next Review Date** | **Person Responsible** |
| *[ E.g. review resilience policy and procedures; test evacuation plan; evaluate effectiveness of client preparedness activities; review insurance policy]* | *[E.g. Annually, quarterly, monthly]* | *[Date]* | *[Name of person in your organisation responsible for this task]* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

# b) Learning and sharing

## Learning

Our staff and volunteers will participate in the following resilience building training opportunities

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training Provider** | **Training Subject** | **Participants** | **Date** |
| *[Name of organisation providing training e.g. Red Cross, local council]* | *[Topic of training session e.g. Communicating in Recovery, client preparedness]* | *[Who in your organisation will attend this training?]* | *[Training date]* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## Sharing information with the community and community organisations

Ongoing improvement of disaster plans requires learning from others. This can take various forms, for example:

* Staff training
* Research and reading up
* Learning from local community experiences and other local organisations

Learning from others brings with it the reciprocal responsibility to share what you learn. This can take various forms, for example:

* Sharing what you learn at inter-agencies
* Writing case studies and sharing them on the web – e.g. on this Disaster Resilience web site.
* Participating in community forums and other events.

*[Document the activities your organisation will undertake to share information about building disaster resilience with other organisations in your community.]*

# c) Working together to improve disaster resilience in your local community

When all Six Steps are in place, or at least in the process of being put into place, there can be opportunities to work together with others in your local community to improve disaster resilience in your local community.

For example in the Blue Mountains which are located on the rim of the Sydney basin in the region identified as Greater Western Sydney, the local community was asking the question:

*What are the needs of identified vulnerable community members within the Blue Mountains to be connected and supported in their community environment? This includes connection and safety at home, in the immediate locality and in disaster situations such as bushfires, storms and extended power outages.*

Local organisations worked together with an advisory committee to answer the question and made recommendations about:

1: Maintain key connections

2: Shared responsibility

3: Recognise the role of community organisations

4: Ageing in community

5: Formal strategy for vulnerable people

6: Enhance community connections and resilience of vulnerable people

7: Vulnerable persons register

*[Document the opportunities for your organisation to work with others to build disaster resilience across your community, including other community organisations, local council, emergency services, researchers etc.]*

# NOTE

This template has been developed by ACOSS as part of its Resilient Community Organisations Resources for the Australian Community Sector. Parts of this template have been adapted from the following:

The Sex Steps in the Disaster Resilience web site: http://resilience.acoss.org.au

Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard ISO 31000:2009

Business.gov.au, *Emergency Management Template and Guide* <http://www.business.gov.au/business-topics/templates-and-downloads/emergency-management-template-and-guide/Pages/default.aspx>.