

An Equity-Centered Approach to Community Engagement



FEMA

AGENDA

- Equity: Big Picture
- Understanding Your Audience
- Integrating Equity
- FEMA Equity Resources
- Questions



Equity: Big Picture



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“ We’re turning a page at FEMA and infusing equity throughout our agency, programs, and policies to better serve people who face unique barriers before, during and after disasters. [...] Systemic racism across institutions and society has sidelined generations of people of color and low-income households, and that practice needs to end.”

— Office of the Administrator
FEMA Administrator, Deanne Criswell



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BRIEFING ROOM

Executive Order 13985:

Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government

A comprehensive approach to advancing equity:

- "Equity" is the consistent and systematic fair, just and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment.
- "Underserved communities" refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social and civic life.

Executive Order 14008:

Tackling Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad

- This order creates a government-wide Justice40 Initiative. Its goal is to deliver 40% of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments to disadvantaged communities.



Equality vs. Equity



* Image is used with permission of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



FEMA Strategic Plan: Goals



Goal 1: Instill Equity as a Foundation of Emergency Management

- 1.1 Cultivate a FEMA that prioritizes and harnesses a diverse workforce
- 1.2 Remove barriers to FEMA programs through a people first approach
- 1.3 Achieve equitable outcomes for those we serve



Goal 2: Lead Whole of Community in Climate Resilience

- 2.1 Increase climate literacy among the emergency management community
- 2.2 Build a climate resilient nation
- 2.3 Empower risk-informed decision making



Goal 3: Promote and Sustain a Ready FEMA and Prepared Nation

- 3.1 Strengthen the emergency management workforce
- 3.2 Posture FEMA to meet current and emergent threats
- 3.3 Unify coordination and delivery of federal assistance



Equity in Region 10

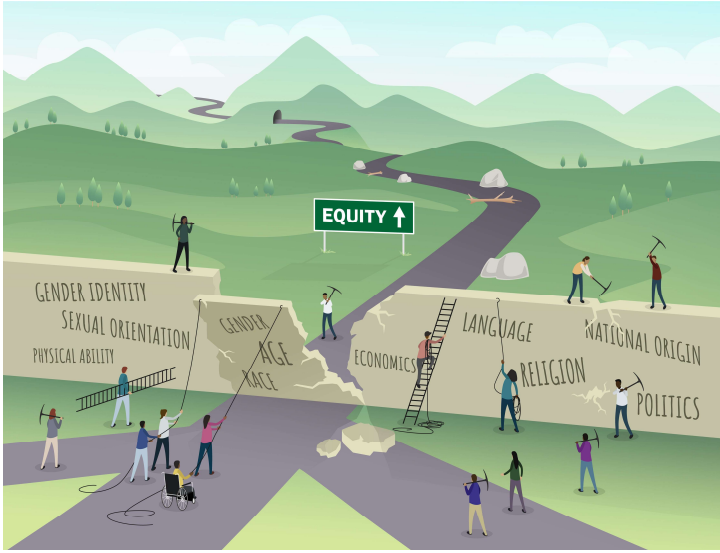
- Enhance our resources and education to build the branch's capacity to work with and support the needs of tribal nations.
- Improve the accessibility of all Region 10 activities.
- Expand direct engagement with people living with disabilities.
- Use data to understand who the underserved communities are in Region 10.
- Assess gaps in services and ways to improve.
- Proactively plan to engage with communities who have groups that do not speak English. Develop materials in those languages, provide onsite translators, etc.
- Partner with tribal and state governments to improve how we carry out an equitable program.



Sitka Harbor, Baranof Island, Alaska



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An illustration of different people helping to break down a wall to access the road to equity.

The equity journey involves engaging the whole community. It also entails breaking down barriers to achieve resilience for all.



Understanding Your Audience



Audience

Questions to think about:

1. Who will this affect? Who should be involved?
2. Whose support do we need?
3. Who needs to know or understand?
4. Who else should we think about?



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Tools to Help You Understand Your Audience



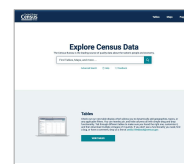
Community Social Vulnerability Index:
This tool uses 15 U.S. census variables to help local officials identify groups that may need support before, during or after disasters.

atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html



FEMA Community Engagement and Prioritization Tool (CEPT):
This is a data-driven, decision-support tool that helps states and region and regions to determine engagements. It looks at risk, opportunity, and interest or need.

fema.gov/floodplain-management/manage-risk/community-engagement-prioritization-tool



U.S. Census Data

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>



FEMA National Risk Index (NRI):
The NRI points out the communities that are most at risk to 18 natural hazards. It shows natural hazard risk metrics visually. The NRI includes data on expected annual losses from natural hazards, social vulnerability and community resilience.

fema.gov/flood-maps/products-tools/national-risk-index



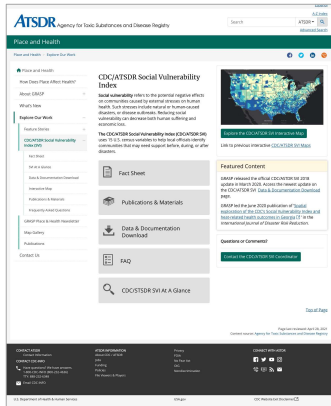
FEMA Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT):
This online tool looks at the interplay of census data, infrastructure locations, and hazards. It includes real-time weather forecasts, historic disasters and an estimated annualized frequency of hazard risk.

fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/resilience-analysis-and-planning-tool



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Social Vulnerability Index



The webpage of the Social Vulnerability Index tool.

This index helps to identify communities that may need support before, during or after a disaster. It uses 15 U.S. Census variables under the following themes:

- Social economic status
- Household composition and disability
- Ethnicity, language, housing type and transportation

It can be used to:

- Identify underserved communities.
- Discover unique community needs.
- Inform insights reports, community engagement plans and hazard mitigation plans.

atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html



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Integrating Equity



Create Equitable Experiences

- Inclusion and Collaborative Decision Making
- Language and Information Sharing
- Using Data, Storytelling and Images



A group of people are in a circle having a conversation with books in their hands.

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Inclusion and Collaborative Decision Making



Thought Starters

- Define the roles of the community in making decisions.
- Make the process, meeting plans, and materials culturally responsive and accessible.
- Offer ways for community members to give input, either throughout the process or at specific touchpoints.

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Shoalwater Bay Tribe Tsunami Tower-Tokeland, WA

- The Shoalwater Bay Tribe built the first free-standing tsunami evacuation tower in the U.S.
- The tribe's hazard mitigation plan has stories from the 1700 Cascadia earthquake and tsunami. These accounts have been passed down through generations.
- The Safe Haven process helped the tribe know their risk in a future Cascadia event. The tribe found they needed an evacuation structure.
- The tribe received \$2.8 million through a FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant. They built the first federally funded vertical tsunami evacuation structure.



Members of the Washington state Department of Natural Resources and Emergency Management Division walk up the stairs of the vertical evacuation structure.

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Language and Information Sharing



Thought Starters

- Make meeting plan(s) or document(s) based on the languages of the community.
- Consider any segments of the community who
 - are hearing or visually impaired. Think about font size, graphic colors, and the use of braille.
- Use jargon-free language in documents, presentations and other materials, whether or not they are technical.
- Use more than one delivery method (e.g., radio, local television networks, news sources, social media) to improve accessibility.

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Salmon Jam- Cordova, AK

- FEMA used the Risk MAP process to respond to the community's desire to learn more about its tsunami and earthquake risk.
- FEMA worked with community officials to use a local event, the Copper River Wild Salmon Festival to engage with the public and raise awareness of these natural hazard risks.
- The event gave regional staff, state and city partners a chance to engage with residents in a nonthreatening environment. They served as a friendly resource to answer questions and provide life-saving information.



Young event attendees walked a mock tsunami evacuation route and learned about emergency preparedness by taking part in a scavenger hunt.



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Using Data, Storytelling and Images



Thought Starters

- Present data through simple visual graphs.
- Include quotes or stories from community members with relevant experiences.
- Use images that represent the populations in the community.

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FEMA Region 10 Hosts Storytelling Booth at 24th Annual Columbia Slough Watershed Council Regatta

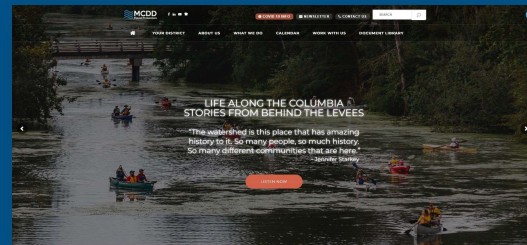
- FEMA Region 10 worked with the Multnomah County Drainage District (MCDD) in Portland, Oregon. They captured stories and questions about living near levees.
- Sixteen participants shared their experiences of living behind the Columbia River levee system.
- FEMA conducted interviews in the interviewees' language of choice (Spanish and English).
- MCDD used the stories to raise awareness of flood risk, encourage community preparedness, and spread information about how levees reduce the impacts of flooding.
- This project helped MCDD build a stronger relationship with FEMA Region 10. It also helped MCDD apply for a Cooperating Technical Partners grant and start to develop a hazard mitigation plan.



▪ <https://www.mccd.org/>



Participants shared their experiences with FEMA staff. They talked about living, working and recreating behind the Columbia River levee system.



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Share how you are integrating equity in your work

FEMA Resources

Resources to enhance education and support equity



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Covers of the Guides to Expanding Mitigation Series

Guides to Expanding Mitigation


- Making the Connection to Equity
- Making the Connection to People With Disabilities
- Making the Connection to the Whole Community
- Making the Connection to Older Adults

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BUILDING ALLIANCES FOR EQUITABLE RESILIENCE
ADVANCING EQUITABLE RESILIENCE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP
April 2022



Cover of Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience



BUILDING ALLIANCES FOR CLIMATE ACTION
ADVANCING CLIMATE ACTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS



Cover of Building Alliances for Climate Action

Resilient Nation Partnership Network Resources:

Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience

- Collaboration by 26 partners in the fields of equity and resilience
- Continued conversations from the “Alliances for Equity” 2020 Virtual Forum
- Guidance, perspectives, personal stories, resources and contributors
- Alliances for Equity partner voices


Building Alliances for Climate Action

- Continued conversations from the “Alliances for Climate Action” 2021 Virtual Forum
- Captures the insights and voices that lead the charge on collective climate action
- Uses perspectives, personal stories, resources and contributors to stress the need to center all climate change actions on equity and community resilience

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State Mitigation Planning Key Topics Bulletin: Planning Process

This [Guide](#) provides advice and ways to meet the requirements laid out in the State Mitigation Planning Policy Guide. It highlights the role of equity in hazard mitigation planning. It also lays out ways for states to form mitigation strategies that reflect the whole community.



State Mitigation Planning Key Topics Bulletin: Planning Process

3.2 Collaboration with Climate and Equity Partners

The Guide highlights the importance of planning for the impacts of climate change, as well as equity in the mitigation plan. That starts with the planning process. These are specialized areas that may not be part of the existing planning team. When growing the team, states should engage partners who can help address more extensive and diverse resiliency needs, or who have expertise in climate science and equity issues. These partners may already be at the table. This is a chance to leverage their experiences in new and different ways.

States should coordinate with agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have expertise in climate change and climate adaptation. This will often be a department of environmental protection or conservation. If the state has a climate adaptation or action plan, start with partners from that effort. Ask for the state climatologist or other experts who can provide scientific data. Academic institutions or non-profits may also be able to provide data or support analysis to identify vulnerabilities. These partners can provide data on the probability of future hazards. They can also help develop ideas for mitigation strategies. Just consider future hazard events.

States should also coordinate with groups that support underserved communities and socially vulnerable populations. These may be agencies, departments, or NGOs. The important thing is to bring partners to the table who can speak to the special needs of underserved communities. They can ensure the mitigation strategy supports these communities and does not harm them. These groups may include:

- Human services agencies
- Human resilience commissions
- Faith-based organizations
- Community resource agencies or NGOs
- NGOs serving underserved communities
- Agritourism supporting rural communities

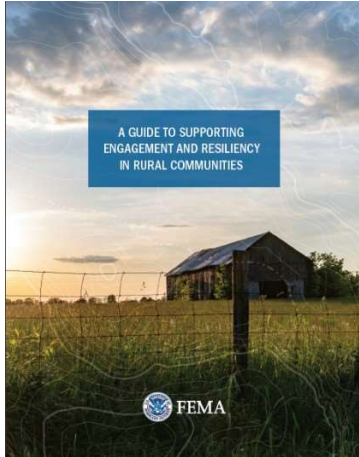
These entities may already be on the planning team. For example, many health departments assist underserved communities. Health and Social Services is one of the special sections that states must engage. These people may already be at the table, but this time, they should pay special attention to the underserved communities and socially vulnerable populations they work with.

Partners across the state bring new jobs and resources to the table. Together partners build capacity for hazard mitigation-related projects by teaching each other's ideas, sharing funding sources, and doing so incrementally until together it forms the whole. In accordance with the contract, waiver, and other partners, the plan must describe how the state will break down those barriers in the future. If applicable, these plans can be mitigation actions. FEMA's [Guidance to Statewide SEACACs](#) provides resources, tips, and examples of partner agencies to include in the planning process.

The cover and page 8 of the State Mitigation Planning Key Topics Bulletin: Planning Process



Rural Engagement Guide



A GUIDE TO SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT AND RESILIENCY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES



Equity is a system of fairness that includes policies, practices, interactions, cultures, and resources that are responsive to all people. Equity in mitigation is achieved when everyone is treated impartially and provided with equal access to information and assistance, allowing everyone to meaningfully participate and make progress in hazard mitigation.

More practically, equity is taking a rural community and an individual's background, income, accessibility to technology, expertise, or transportation into account when asking them to effectively work alongside FEMA and its partners to advance community resiliency. This will mean prioritizing the real-life implications of obstacles and opportunities to the people who live and work in these rural communities.



The cover and page 12 of A Guide to Supporting Engagement and Resilience Communities

Use Arts and Experiential Learning to Drive Equity and Increase Accessibility

Arts and Experiential Learning:

- Let FEMA and partners engage with communities in non-technical, direct and inclusive ways.
- Help broader audiences access risk and mitigation information.

These types of engagement can reach community members from diverse backgrounds; they help people to connect across cultural, linguistic and even perceived barriers.



PROJECT

Denver art installation promotes flood mitigation efforts

10/20/2021 7 MIN READ

By Jay Landers

A new public art installation in Denver is part skate park, part community gathering place, and part stormwater management feature. By combining all these elements, the project achieves the goals of a new campaign by Region 8 of the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency to use art to raise awareness regarding flood hazards and methods for reducing flood hazard risks.

Communicating differently



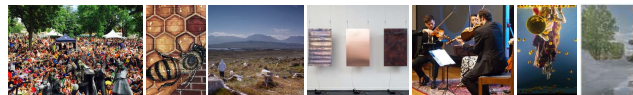
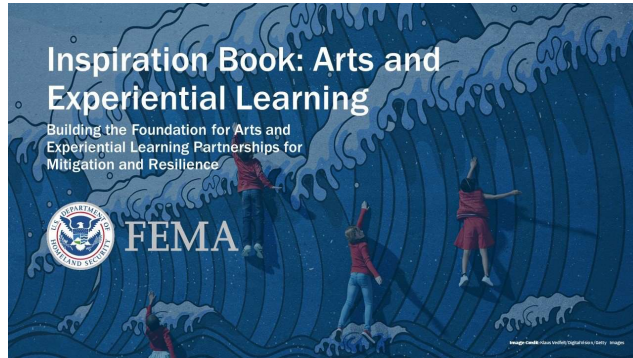
The Community forms art project functions simultaneously as gathering space, recreational area, and stormwater infrastructure. (Photo by Third Dure Productions, courtesy of Matt Barton and Brock Cule)

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Inspiration Book

Arts and experiential learning tap into **sights, sounds, motions and emotions.**

They let us use community identity and culture to ignite change in ways data alone cannot.



The cover of the Inspiration Book: Arts and Experiential Learning.

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Takeaways/Questions



Something I learned that surprised me.



Something I want to know more about.



What I'll start tomorrow.



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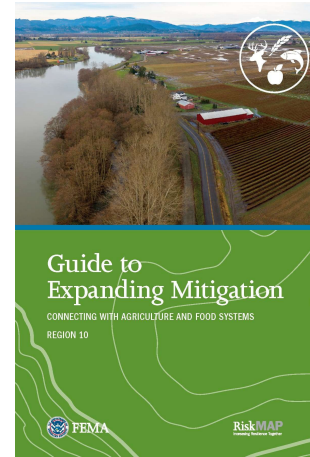
JaQuisha Hudson
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Appendix



The Region 10 Guide to Expanding Mitigation: Connecting With Agriculture and Food Systems

- The guide aims to help community officials better connect with businesses and individuals in this sector.
- It gives community and tribal leaders information they can use to:
 - Start discussions.
 - Build partnerships.
 - Plan for and invest in mitigation projects.
- It has examples of best practices in partnerships and planning. It offers ideas, considerations and resources to help your mitigation plans account for local need.
- The diverse set of stakeholders who helped develop the guide offer a variety of voices.
- It highlights subsistence-based activities as a priority for planning.



Cover of the Region 10 Guide to Expanding Mitigation: Connecting With Agriculture and Food Systems
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Tools and Links

Tool	Purpose	Project Application
Guides to Expanding Mitigation	These guides highlight innovative and emerging partnerships for hazard mitigation projects. They suggest new sectors to engage.	Apply the hazard vulnerabilities featured in the Guides' topic areas. Get ideas for collaboration, such as potential stakeholders and new partners.
<p>RNPN Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Alliances for Equitable Resilience • Building Alliances for Climate Action 	<p>Advancing equitable resilience initiatives is a key goal for the RNPN. The first guide has guidance, perspectives, personal stories and resources. They come from 26 partners in the fields of equity and resilience.</p> <p>The climate action resource includes the work of many people and organizations. In a unifying voice, it guides the Whole Community in ways to address the climate crisis.</p>	<p>Spark ideas for partnerships; play the Partner Voices in State and Federal partner meetings to plan for equity centered, whole community engagement.</p> <p>Spark ideas about partnerships.</p>
Tribal Mitigation Planning Handbook	This helps tribal governments create and update their hazard mitigation plans. It recommends ways to make a successful plan and offers other resources.	Help tribal governments develop hazard mitigation plans.



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Tools and Links (continued)

Tool	Purpose	Project Application
Inspiration Book	This talks about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art and experiential learning projects. • The way they can add benefit to a community engagement strategy. • Some initial steps to begin this kind of project. • Inspirational examples of arts and experiential learning related to preparedness and resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use arts and experiential learning to help a community understand risk. • Build a culture of preparedness and resilience. • Get ideas on ways for FEMA and partners to engage with communities in non-technical, direct and inclusive ways. • Make risk and mitigation information more accessible and reach broader audiences.
A Guide to Supporting Engagement and Resiliency in Rural Communities	The insights in this guide cover issues related to rural communities and their culture. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to high-speed internet. • Driving distance and access to commonly used community meeting spaces. • Establish trust. • Access to resources. • The value of community champions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design outreach and engagement activities that are authentic for a rural community and its unique challenges.



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