

The role of housing-focused nonprofits in disaster response and recovery: Habitat for Humanity Oregon case study



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PROFESSIONAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Issue

The role of nonprofits in responding to disasters is growing nationwide. While federal spending for disasters is at an all-time high, government assistance on the ground is diminishing every year. Filling the gap of the federal response has historically been attempted by large nonprofits such as the Red Cross and many faith-based organizations. As disasters grow more frequent and destructive, affecting wider areas both rural and urban, federal agencies will increasingly call upon local jurisdictions and organizations to help with response and recovery activities.

Most small, housing-focused nonprofits do not consider their missions or operations as serving any role in disaster response or recovery. In most cases, nonprofits, even those skilled in providing housing, are not factored in as a vital part of recovery efforts. While many of these organizations serve low-income or vulnerable populations, they have not considered the full risks their clients may face and how they might help mitigate those risks. Many have not identified local hazards, or where they build houses in relation to those hazards. Some even know they have houses and families in threatened areas, but cannot afford alternative locations.

Additionally, small housing nonprofits have rarely attempted or completed a comprehensive disaster plan. They have not prepared emergency kits, prepared evacuation plans, or organized their business continuity. Because they have not planned, they have not identified their organization's needs and capacities. They have not communicated these needs and capacities with local emergency managers, or participated in trainings or exercises. This lack of disaster planning and communication in turn prevents local emergency management agencies from knowing which organizations can be relied on to assist following a disaster. So, while the need grows for more nonprofits to assist in local and regional disaster response and recovery, this need is not being met by the nonprofit organizations themselves.

Research Questions

This project focused on two major research questions, with several sub-questions. The question responses helped provide recommendations for housing-focused nonprofits in disaster-prone areas:

1. How do local nonprofits engaged in the provision of housing (like Habitat for Humanity affiliates) contribute to disaster response and recovery?

1a. Can the response and recovery community of a particular area operate more effectively by increasing the disaster planning for housing-focused nonprofits?

2. What are the existing assumptions/relationships/networks between a housing nonprofit, the local emergency management agency, and their community regarding responding to and recovering from disasters?

2a. Are there conflicts between the actual capacities of a housing nonprofit and the expectations of the public (government agencies, nonprofit clients, nonprofit partners, etc.) as to the services a nonprofit can provide following a disaster?

2b. If so, how might communities resolve these conflicts to be more resilient in case of a disaster?

Habitat for Humanity Case Study

Habitat for Humanity already responds to disasters as an international organization operating in countries all over the world. In the US, local Habitat affiliates operate as separate nonprofit entities, each with their own budgets, staff, protocol and skillsets. All affiliates focus mainly on volunteer management to build affordable housing for low-income residents. Habitat International and the Habitat State Support Organizations (SSOs) are encouraging local affiliates to complete disaster preparedness and response plans, but most affiliates are severely limited in time, money and personnel. Affiliates in Oregon recognize the importance of planning for business continuity and recovery, particularly given the emerging understanding of a threat from a Cascadia earthquake and tsunami, but lack the resources to complete plans. Some affiliates must build homes in vulnerable areas, such as flood zones, and would like to provide their families with additional emergency information.

Through a partnership with Habitat for Humanity, I was able to engage local Habitat affiliates in the City of Portland and in Lincoln County, Oregon, as case studies to determine present expectations and capacities, and to identify needs and opportunities for the two locations. I also interviewed these area's emergency managers. The two case study affiliates presented a range of issues based on their differences: an urban, well-resourced affiliate with a broad range of partners, and a rural, coastal affiliate with few resources or partnerships. I used the input and investigation to inform my findings and also to update Habitat for Humanity's existing disaster planning template. The existing disaster planning template provided by Habitat was incomplete, addressing only disaster preparedness, was organized poorly, and did not contain certain planning components identified by emergency managers and affiliates as vital information in case of a disaster. The template was updated to address business continuity, disaster response, and long-term recovery planning activities. The hope is that this new template will meet the expressed needs of affiliates and emergency management, increase the ease of use and speed of planning, and increase the number of affiliates who actually plan and prepare for local and regional disasters.

Findings

This research and case study have produced three major findings that can be applied to the two Habitat case study affiliates, all Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Oregon, as well as to housing nonprofits nationwide. Indeed, these recommendations can be used by any organization interested in expanding their roles to serve a local or regional need for disaster response or recovery activities. These findings, at first glance seemingly simple, may represent years of concerted effort for nonprofits and their communities in order to complete them and be as prepared for disasters as possible.

Finding #1: Housing nonprofits should recognize their potential roles in the emergency management community, drawing on their expertise to help following a disaster.

The first thing housing nonprofits must realize is that they in fact can serve a valuable role in disaster response and recovery. Emergency managers acknowledge their own extreme

limitations following a major event, and recognize the value of small, local nonprofits, with their extended community relations, strong partnerships with suppliers, and responsibility to vulnerable populations. Housing nonprofits may in fact be able to contribute much more to response activities immediately following a disaster than they realize, such as performing damage inventories, providing relief shelters and temporary housing, volunteer coordination, fundraising, and contribution management, be it monetary or construction materials. Additionally, those nonprofits with building supply warehouses could leverage this local asset as emergency evacuation sites, donation drop off sites, or for temporary staging of emergency supplies. But without a doubt, housing nonprofit's greatest strength remains in the long-term recovery activity of rebuilding housing that was damaged or destroyed.

Finding #2: Housing nonprofits need to cultivate open lines of communication between their clients, partners, emergency managers and community regarding disaster response and recovery activities.

Emergency managers view communication as the critical component of a functional response and recovery operation. Communication needs to occur early and often in order to provide clarity as to roles and responsibilities following a disaster, as well as to build a solid network of organizations that can effectively work together and not duplicate activities or leave vital needs unaddressed. The hardest time to attempt communications is under the extreme duress following a major disaster. Good communication starts at home with staff and clients, and builds up to the level of local partners, government and emergency managers. These lines of communication attempt to disclose one's acceptance, willingness, capacity and limitations when it comes to being prepared, or being able to assist in response or recovery operations. Communications between emergency managers and housing nonprofits has to be a two-way street. Emergency managers should urge more local nonprofits, especially those like housing nonprofits with multiple skillsets, to plan on serving an expanded role in the days and months following an emergency. If more organizations were made fully aware of the need that may exist should a catastrophe occur, then they would have the opportunity to properly prepare operations and personnel to meet that need, rather than having to respond without those preparations and plans.

Finding #3: Housing nonprofits should prioritize disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning as the major step towards protecting their organization and effectively participating in the emergency management community.

Planning for disaster response and recovery has been universally recommended throughout this research as a way to increase the effectiveness of response and recovery. If local housing nonprofits wish to protect their business and clients, and increase their roles and responsibilities following disasters, then the primary step would be to complete a disaster plan. Through the activity of planning, organizations can assess their current and projected capacities, prepare their offices, staff and partner families for emergencies, and plan for wider response and recovery operations. They then can communicate their preparations and plans with their local emergency management. By performing this critical step of disaster planning, organizational response effectiveness should increase. Likewise, the response and recovery of their local area or region should also increase in effectiveness, making for a more resilient community overall.

Findings Summary

The following table summarizes the major recommendations that emerged from the case study interviews and research. They are in no way exhaustive, but represent the starting point of an ongoing conversation and planning exercise for local nonprofit organizations, their clients, and the emergency management agency. Each community entity has different roles and responsibilities to carry out in order to increase the overall community resilience.

Recommended Action	Responsibility		
<i>Finding 1: Recognize Potential Roles</i>	<i>Nonprofit</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Emergency Mgmt</i>
Research local hazards and provide education	X		X
Participate in local response exercises	X		X
Do training for organizations or clients	X	X	
Understand organizational capacities for response and recovery	X	X	X
Provide community hazard retrofits and preparations	X		
Provide clean up assistance following disaster	X	X	
Provide damage assessments following disaster	X	X	
Provide volunteer coordination following disaster	X		
Provide donation and fundraising management	X		
Include hazards in due diligence for properties	X		
Design and build resilient homes	X		
Join VOAD or Disaster Resilience Team	X		X

<i>Finding 2: Cultivate Open Lines of Communication</i>	<i>Nonprofit</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Emergency Mgmt</i>
Become trained in CERT, ICS, NIMS	X		
Develop backup communications strategy (HAM radios)	X		X
Define communication protocol for community	X	X	X
Develop communications between EM and nonprofits	X		X
Coordinate with other local agencies and assign roles	X		X
Develop emergency contact sheets and share with EM	X		
Communicate with sister agencies outside of area	X		X
Increase communications within nonprofit organization	X		
Complete a Memorandum of Understanding between agencies	X		X

<i>Finding 3: Prioritize Disaster Planning Activities</i>	<i>Nonprofit</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Emergency Mgmt</i>
Appoint lead person for planning activities	X		X
Use planning template to assist in documentation	X		
Perform business continuity planning	X		
Perform life safety planning	X	X	
Develop response and recovery plan	X		X
Provide updates to planning templates and protocol	X		X

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Introduction

Background: Disasters and Nonprofits

Natural hazards that impact vulnerable human environments can easily become disasters. Disasters have the capacity to destroy the built environment as well as the social fabric of a place through the displacement of its residents. With more people moving to coastal communities than ever before, more people stand to be affected. “Since 1970, the number of U.S. residents living in coastal counties has grown from 110 million to more than 150 million, accounting for more than half of the national population” (Pais and Elliot 2008). The built environment and its interconnected systems is becoming more extensive, dense, complicated, and expensive to maintain and update. “Natural and technological hazards simply have much more to destroy per square mile” (Lichterman 2000).

As witnessed vividly after 9/11 and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and again after Superstorm Sandy, many nonprofit agencies provide vital preparedness, response and recovery assistance to local areas struck by disasters. Indeed, nongovernmental (NGOs) and especially faith-based organizations (FBOs) have a long history of responding to disasters worldwide (Fagnoni 2006). In some cases, they lead the charge, and are operating transnationally. In other cases, they are small local groups that fill gaps in public agencies’ response, and can call on resources from individuals and the local private sector. They act as advocates for victims, and work to supplement private and government sector long-term services and case management.

The National Recovery Framework identifies nonprofit agencies as vital resources for helping an area struck by disaster. In addition, some, but not all, counties and municipalities have their own recovery frameworks in place. However, few of these plans specify particular roles and responsibilities for the major nonprofits operating in an area. In certain areas of the country, the roles of local nonprofits may have to expand to fill new needs. However, even with this need identified, many nonprofits have not appropriately planned for such events, and may assume that their local emergency management has sufficiently done so.

While response after a disaster must meet a wide variety of needs, long-term recovery from a disaster often centers on the reconstruction of housing and residential units. This reconstruction not only is essential in order to provide long-term shelter to those affected, or merely to put a roof back over people’s heads, but housing is also the basis for a community rebuilding its economic, social and cultural institutions. “Lack of housing, transportation, and employment provide serious barriers to survivors’ recovery, either in their home or host communities.” (Gajewski et al. 2010).

For those nonprofit agencies that focus on housing vulnerable populations such as low-income families or minorities, the responsibility to best serve these families’ long-term needs is paramount. Where, how, and when a person is housed can greatly contribute to their level of vulnerability (Cutter and Finch 2008). Siting low-income housing in flood-zones, tsunami inundation zones, or in earthquake zones adds to both the risk and the difficulty in responding and recovering from a disaster. For nonprofits engaged in the

provision of housing, planning ahead for the consequences of these decisions should be of highest importance. For some local nonprofits, they have no choice but to build on land they can afford. On the coast, the cheaper land sometimes is in flood zones. The risk is shifted both onto the nonprofit, and the family they place in the hazard zone. How nonprofits address this issue long term, like its affects on impacts for the occupants should a disaster occur.

In Oregon, with the growing threat of floods, wildfires, or a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and the accompanying tsunami, some local municipalities are experiencing increased urgency regarding disaster planning. Whereas some nonprofits have never historically been involved in disaster response, or were only involved in long-term recovery efforts, their help is more frequently needed to assist official government response (Stys 2011). However, conflicts may arise between fulfilling an organization's mission, accommodating donor intent, meeting community needs and expectations, and the organization's actual operational capacity.

When an emergency hits, an organization may be challenged to remain in operation, respond to an increased demand for services, and take on new roles to fill gaps—all the while continuing to serve its primary clients and mission. In many cases, the communication of roles and responsibilities, the particular capacities of a nonprofit organization, and the timing of providing assistance are all unclear. The ideal time to make a plan to do all this is, understandably, prior to an emergency. Therefore, it is in the best interest of local nonprofit organizations and the communities they serve to properly plan for these critical tasks sooner rather than later. How and to what degree that planning occurs is completely dependent on local needs and the capacity of the particular organization.

Project Purpose

My project seeks to address the concern expressed above, answer key research questions, and assist a nonprofit organization in disaster planning. I hope to contribute to the understanding of the needs and potential roles of housing nonprofits, in disaster response and recovery activities. I also hope to contribute practically through specific recommendations for housing nonprofits, and with the refinement of disaster planning tools for nonprofit organizations.

Research Questions

Two key research questions and several sub-questions drove my project and helped focus my specific case study interview questions.

1. How do local nonprofits engaged in the provision of housing (like Habitat for Humanity affiliates) contribute to disaster response and recovery?
 - 1a. Can the response and recovery community of a particular area operate more effectively by increasing the disaster planning for housing-focused nonprofits?
2. What are the existing assumptions/relationships/networks between a housing nonprofit, the local emergency management agency, and their community regarding responding to and recovering from disasters?

2a. Are there conflicts between the actual capacities of a housing nonprofit and the expectations of the public (government agencies, nonprofit clients, nonprofit partners, etc.) as to the services a nonprofit can provide following a disaster?

2b. If so, how might communities resolve these conflicts to be more resilient in case of a disaster?

Project Methods

This section outlines the methodology used in this project. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized to answer the research questions, and I used the results to inform revisions of Habitat's disaster planning template.

Literature Review

The role of nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based organizations following a disaster has been acknowledged in official documents from the federal, state and county levels, and is analyzed to varying degrees in the planning literature. This literature review uses both the academic discussion (mainly the analysis of the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita) and the literature of the emergency management and planning disciplines, codified in official frameworks and plans. The first purpose is to set the stage concerning the importance, the effectiveness, and the challenges for nonprofit organizations in planning for response and recovery activities. The second purpose is to describe the needs of nonprofits and the importance of planning activities at the local nonprofit level.

Habitat for Humanity Conference Participation

Habitat for Humanity Oregon (HFHO or Habitat Oregon), which is Habitat's State Support Organization (SSO) held their Northwest Regional Conference in Eugene, in the fall of 2012. There, I manned a booth with hazard preparedness information on behalf of the Oregon Partnership for Disaster Resilience, and spoke informally with Habitat members. With permission from HFHO's director, I also pitched an exit project idea to a breakout session for Habitat construction managers, and surveyed them for interest. My original proposal dealt with the use of disaster-resistant construction methods by housing nonprofits. I also presented my project idea to the entire conference as part of a lunchtime disaster education session.

Based on feedback from conference attendees, and the surveys I collected from construction managers, it was clear there was not enough interest in my proposal to continue with it. It appeared that best practices for construction were already being followed. However, discussions and feedback with affiliate directors at the conference made it clear that a real need existed in helping with disaster planning on the affiliate level. The HFHO director agreed that this would be a tremendous help, and so I shifted my project focus to this task, which helped to form my current research questions and focus.

Habitat for Humanity Case Study Participants

With the help of the SSO, I sought local Habitat affiliates who would agree to act as case studies for this project and be interviewed and assessed. These affiliates would help focus my information gathering on specific geographic areas, and help me to develop and test my disaster plan template. Based on conversations and feedback received at the fall 2012 Habitat regional conference, I approached affiliate directors from Lincoln County (Newport), and Portland, Oregon, to serve as Case Study Affiliates. They both agreed. These two very different affiliates, one inland-urban and one coastal-rural, provided a diverse range of needs and challenges, as well as particular recommendations for affiliate planning. In addition to the two affiliates, Habitat Oregon agreed to act as a case study participant to be interviewed and analyzed for this project.

HFHO's roles in this project included:

- Providing project guidance
- Helping coordinate with case study affiliates and HFH International to provide vital communications for project development
- Helping identify relationships with other local and state aid organizations (VOAD)
- Advocating for planning activities by affiliates
- Helping to package plan template to be most useful for Oregon affiliates

The Portland and Lincoln County affiliate's roles in this project included:

- Participating as Case Study Affiliate
- Providing information on current practices and methods for site evaluation, hazard planning and home construction
- Helping guide process at the local level

Habitat Affiliate Survey

In an effort to better understand Habitat's current disaster preparedness and planning activities across the state, I developed a 22-question scoping survey to be distributed statewide via the Habitat Oregon SSO. The survey was released to all 32 Oregon affiliates via an online survey through Habitat Oregon's private Constant Contact webpage. In addition, the survey was distributed to five affiliates in other states who had already experienced disasters or who had already completed disaster plans. I received 22 responses, a 63% response rate among Oregon affiliates. Twenty of the responding affiliates were from Oregon, one affiliate was from Santa Barbara, California, and one was from North Hampton, Virginia. All of the participant's identities were kept confidential, and the results were analyzed and summarized for Habitat and this report. Through the survey results the SSO and myself gained baseline knowledge, and learned about individual affiliate's current capacity and interest in planning. My direction in updating the existing Habitat disaster plan template's content was also informed by the survey results.

Case Study Interviews

In order to get different perspectives on my research questions, but more importantly to facilitate the beginnings of community dialogue, I interviewed staff from Habitat for Humanity, as well as personnel working for Emergency Management in the Case Study Affiliate's local areas. I conducted eight interviews overall:

- Two informal interviews with out of state emergency managers
- The director of HFHO in Portland
- The executive director of the Habitat Portland/Metro East affiliate
- The executive director of the Habitat Lincoln County affiliate
- The Lincoln County Emergency Manager in Newport
- The Multnomah County Emergency Manager in Portland
- A Senior Emergency Manager with Oregon Emergency Management in Salem

Participants were given verbal and written information about the research and their rights, and each signed a consent form. I asked questions to help determine the state of their organization's emergency operations and their relationships with other parties in their

community. I took written notes on my laptop computer using only job title and organization as identifiers. I then analyzed the answers, and grouped them into the following categories: 1) facts and assumptions; 2) contributions, capacities and expectations; 3) needs and opportunities; 4) conflicts; and 5) recommendations. The analysis was shared with all parties in an effort to help facilitate dialogue and internal planning.

Disaster Plan Development

One of my main goals for this exit project was to produce an improved planning product that could help Habitat Oregon's SSO and Oregon affiliates with disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning. My strategy was to update, amend, add to, and reorganize the Habitat planning template that already existed. This process was informed by the findings from the Habitat survey, the literature review, the case study interviews, and my ongoing discussions with the SSO and Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI).

Project Challenges

The main challenge of this project was balancing the needs of a "client" organization, and the needs of the academic research exercise. I did not want to undertake two projects instead of one. Even though the research would inform the revision of the plan template, the two products were very different. To accomplish this I would have to divide my attention on doing the research, then updating the plan template, and then writing the report. Fortunately I had the academic timeframe to do both aspects, and I hope the results are beneficial and helpful to all parties. Without maintaining several key relationships over the two years of this project, it wouldn't have been possible to see it through, and those allies and supporters helped to add legitimacy to the final product for Habitat.

Literature Review

The role of nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based organizations following a disaster has been acknowledged in official documents from the federal, state and county levels, and analyzed to varying degrees by the planning literature. This literature review uses both the academic discussion (mainly analyzing the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita) and the literature of the emergency management and planning world, codified in official frameworks and plans to outline the need for nonprofit planning and response.

The role of NGOs after disasters

Disasters are complicated phenomena. The issues of responding and recovering from them are even more complex. Besides loss of life and property, the financial cost of recovering from a disaster is a major factor in the community's level of resilience. Over the course of the 1990's, the federal government spent an average of \$10 billion a year on disaster relief (Lichterman 2000). But recently, total federal spending on disaster relief and recovery between 2011 and 2013 amounted to over \$136 billion (Weiss and Weidman 2013). Meanwhile, federal pre-disaster mitigation funding has declined over the last decade (FY2011 budget: \$77.7M; compared to FY2013: \$35.5M), even though it has been shown that every \$1 in federal mitigation spending equals \$4 saved in recovery spending (MMC 2005).

Currently, "federal planning operates on a premise that disaster response is foremost a local operation" (Brudney and Gazley 2009). County or city emergency managers and law enforcement usually lead the local response. However, the other major players in local operations include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), nonprofit organizations, and faith-based organizations (FBOs). The structure and missions of these local, private organizations are often better suited to make decisions about providing social services. They also "serve as the conduit for government funding," (Gajewski et al. 2010), taking the federal money and serving the needs of the local population through activities such as community recovery planning, case management services, volunteer coordination, support services, housing repair, and construction management (NDRF, 2011). But perhaps most importantly, the local organizations are the ones with established relationships with the individuals that will most need support and assistance following a disaster: non-English speakers, people with disabilities, seniors, and low-income families (Stys 2011).

Although most non-profits would not consider themselves as a participating member of the emergency management system, the vast majority will react in some way after a manmade or natural disaster event (Stys 2011). If not immediately, then perhaps they will contribute during the recovery phase when federal and state recovery support recedes and local leadership and community recovery organizations must complete the mission (FEMA 2011). This is the model presented in the National Disaster Recovery Framework, the guide for federal recovery efforts. Whether it works that way at the local level depends on the community and the organizations. While it is true that NGOs are more agile and less bureaucratic than most federal agencies, "they sometimes lack resources, coordination, accountability and equity" (Gajewski et al, 2010). They can adapt easily to fill the gaps

caused by the constraints in the public agencies, like poor management (Fremont-Smith, Boris, and Steuerle 2006), but they are also limited by size, scale and trained staff.

This flexibility was put to the test following the Gulf Hurricanes of 2005. While many established nonprofits like the Red Cross operated at new levels in terms of receiving and managing donations, or providing emergency shelter and transportation, they also faced challenges and critiques from the public for the management of disaster response and relief. Meanwhile smaller nonprofit organizations also stepped up and increased their workloads and expanded their missions. There were also many brand new organizations formed in order to assist in some way and fill in the gaps. Finally, there were those organizations, church groups, neighborhood organizations, schools, etc. that found themselves in response or recovery roles without any training or foresight.

Habitat for Humanity's Disaster Response was very active after the hurricanes. For example, Habitat for Humanity's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita showed donors and partner families that Habitat for Humanity could respond to disasters on a large scale, raising expectations for similar responses to disaster events. But because most U.S. disasters are localized, the appropriate response is more likely to depend on the local affiliate's capability and effort (Habitat for Humanity, 2008). The affiliates down in the Gulf had faced and helped recover from hurricanes in the past, and so knew that they may have to one day step up to provide a greater level of service. They were more prepared.

Issues for housing nonprofits

Some Americans now believe that nonprofit social welfare agencies are the best suited to respond to disasters, given their diverse base of support which includes government, individual, corporate and foundation funds (Smith 2006). Following Hurricane Katrina, there was a tremendous influx of funding to the area. Much of this funding went to nonprofits and other agencies to provide operations and services. But even with new streams of funding, the basic needs of long term affordable housing and transportation went unmet for many residents. These services being typically beyond the scope of NGOs whose mission is primarily one of response (Gajewski et al. 2010). The local and regional need was just too overwhelming, and the destruction and displacement just too great. The lower-income neighborhoods were the worst hit, resulting in thousands of renters and homeowners unable to return or rebuild.

Housing can be the most critical and challenging issue of disaster recovery. It is critical because "local economies cannot recover from devastating disasters without adequate housing, especially affordable housing" (FEMA 2011). This essential need for housing is denoted in the National Response Plan as Emergency Support Function 6: Short and Long-term Housing. Housing is a challenge because the rebuilding phase has to occur at an accelerated pace following a disaster. "These conditions create design, construction, labor, materials, logistics, inspection and financing issues" (FEMA 2011). Long term housing construction is further complicated when economic gains are part of the recovery equation. A decrease in viable housing stock means a demand for labor and an increase in housing costs, which means that many low-income residents previously living in affected areas cannot easily return to their neighborhoods, as the "growth machine" turns into a "recovery machine" (Pais and Elliot 2008). The rebuilding of neighborhoods with far less

affordable units can be seen in the years following Katrina, especially in the New Orleans area.

With all the destruction that can occur, and with all the lives that can be affected in the process, the demand for more effective long-term recovery systems and protocols has intensified (Stys 2011). NGOs and FBOs who specialize in housing have a particularly critical role to play in helping a local area recover. More than a decade ago, the Post 9/11 GAO report recommended enhanced coordination among FEMA with charities, increased attention to public education about disasters, and the creation of plans to address future events (Fagnoni 2006). Today it seems housing nonprofits are in the same place, looking for better ways to plan, to increase their effectiveness in emerging roles, and to properly serve their community's vulnerable populations.

The major issue for housing nonprofits appears to be the willingness of organizations to develop joint planning and communication systems between community partners in advance of disasters. Sharing information is one of the most critical functions for local networks of response agencies (Brudney and Gazley 2009). Each organization has a different capacity to engage, work with, or share information with local agencies and departments, such as emergency management. Non-profits typically do not have the planning tools and expertise, nor do they take the time to engage in developing relationships with local emergency responders who do have the tools and expertise (Stys 2011). With communication and training between public and private agencies, communities can build greater capacity and resilience in the face of disasters (Stys 2011).

The need for planning activities

Disaster planning helps to anticipate and address future issues. Disaster planning can also help identify complexities, and find ways to manage extreme or unknown outcomes. Sometimes this type of planning can save money, property and lives. "At times of disaster, impacts and losses can be substantially reduced if authorities, individuals and communities are well prepared and ready to act and are equipped with the knowledge and capacities for effective disaster management" (United Nations 2005). The speed and success of recovery can also be greatly enhanced if the process and protocols for coordinated post-disaster recovery planning and implementation are established prior to a disaster (FEMA 2011).

Disaster planning is done by analyzing threats and potential impacts, measuring resources and capacities, and forging partnerships and communicating expectations and plans. Individuals, organizations and communities develop strategic actions to mitigate, prepare and recover. It's important that various community organizations plan, so as to identify and utilize their known strengths. "Both government and private sector agencies have inherent limitations; each should try to develop their capacities in ways that best complement the other" (Fremont-Smith, Boris, and Steuerle 2006). Government can support social and nonprofit agencies through help in the planning process, and also through direct grants, contract programs, and many indirect approaches like tax credits and deductions, government-backed loans, and tax-exempt bonds (Smith 2006). This model does not, however, mean to put nonprofits in charge of recovery efforts. It's been noted in many cases that NGOs "cannot substitute for federal and state efforts. They function best as an adjunct to the state and benefit from state oversight, support, and monitoring" (Gajewski et

al. 2010).

This supporting role for NGOs and FBOs doesn't have to be a subordinate one, but it does vary with how the government sector responds following each particular disaster. For example, after September 11th, the state response was strong, and the nonprofit sector worked alongside the government to fill in the gaps the government left behind. But following Katrina, the immediate federal response was weak. Even though the public expectation was that NGOs would eventually respond, the nonprofit sector had neither the organizational structure nor the resources to meet the huge immediate needs. (Fremont-Smith, Boris, and Steeurle 2006). Faced with the federal expectation that NGOs will need to fill the void left by federal efforts, NGOs are now strongly urged to begin planning for local and regional response and recovery tasks. These planning efforts should focus on coordinated decision-making, community participation, establishing partnerships, public education, organizational preparedness and flexibility, and stronger building codes and site planning protocol (FEMA 2011).

Official federal documents (e.g. National Response Framework) encourage NGOs and voluntary organizations to contribute to local disaster preparedness through training and managing volunteer resources, identifying shelter locations and needed supplies, providing critical emergency services to those in need, or identifying those whose needs have not been met and helping coordinate the provision of assistance (FEMA 2008). While not all nonprofits can address all these issues, housing nonprofits are particularly well suited to address issues of training and managing volunteers, and providing long term shelter, i.e. housing. Through preparing disaster response and recovery plans, these capacities can be identified, communicated and utilized.

If planning does occur, it can have a huge effect both operationally and psychologically in a community. "Residents of cities in regions threatened by a variety of natural and technological hazards are likely to feel more secure and less fearful about the impact of future disasters if they have prepared for potential emergencies through a community-based disaster preparedness program" (Lichterman 2000). This can be true not only for residents and families, but also for emergency management and the local response and relief organizations.

If no planning occurs at the local level, capacities and roles are not identified, and then the functionality of organizations after a disaster can be diminished. The role of NGOs may be identified at the national and state level, but often no work has been done to make the roles functional and operational at the local level. If this is the case, local organizations "are likely to be left out at the local level of the planning processes and resource decisions". This can create more frustration and miscommunication in the chaos following an event. It is therefore essential to develop and cultivate the relationships that increase post-disaster collaboration and decision-making, both within an organization and between public and private agents (Stys 2011). This is especially critical at the community level where nongovernmental partners in the private and nonprofit sectors play a more critical role in meeting local needs.

Future research needs

There are several gaps in the research surrounding the efficacy of NGO and FBO response and recovery efforts. First, as the federal government assumes less of an operational and more of a supportive role, more communication and coordination should also be occurring. However, research shows that some federal agencies “do not coordinate with voluntary organizations to the extent the National Response Framework specifies” (Brudney and Gazley 2009). That is, the Framework says one thing, but real collaboration at the local level is still emerging, mainly because it does not occur systematically. This presents opportunities for more focus on this topic.

Second, there has been limited research on the non-profit sector’s actual assets, roles, gaps and potential in providing coordinated support and operations (Stys 2011). This seems to stem mainly from few nonprofits at the local level creating or maintaining a disaster plan outlining capacities and roles.

Third, for those communities who have begun planning, there exists only a “weak understanding of the ways in which local jurisdictions and nonprofits plan proactively to meet future emergencies, or of the scope of their joint planning” (Brudney and Gazley 2009). This means there are important lessons and methods that aren’t being shared with other communities, and many organizations feel they must reinvent the wheel when they finally are able to plan for disasters.

Finally, it would be helpful to research the relationship between equity issues surrounding housing vulnerable populations in known hazard zones and the roles and responsibilities of housing nonprofits. For instance, some Habitat for Humanity affiliates do not consider hazards in their property acquisitions or due diligence, but are limited in their location choices due to costs. They are forced to mitigate whatever risks may be present rather than choose a better, more expensive site. This phenomenon occurs in many areas, and is an ongoing topic for researchers and nonprofits alike.

Habitat for Humanity Oregon: Case Study Results

This section provides a synthesis of my case study research with Habitat for Humanity Oregon. The section begins with information on Habitat for Humanity, from the international organization down to its small local affiliates. Specific case study information is broken up into two geographic sections: Portland and Lincoln County. These sections include discussions of the Oregon SSO, Habitat case study affiliates, and the local emergency management. Recommendations come from background research, interviews with Habitat and emergency management staff, as well as from the affiliate survey.

Habitat for Humanity Overview

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI or Habitat) is a non-governmental and non-profit organization, founded in 1976 and based out of Georgia. HFHI is a faith-based, Christian organization that addresses poverty and housing issues all over the world, helping to build, renovate and repair more than 600,000 affordable houses, sheltering more than 3 million people. HFH operates in more than 90 countries and all 50 of the United States. Habitat's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. To accomplish this, they focus on shelter and advocate for affordable housing. Its core competencies are providing sustainable shelter and housing solutions. It is also experienced in creating and sustaining community and private-party partnerships for goods and services related to homebuilding, and in training and managing volunteers to build high-quality, affordable housing.

Habitat's organizational structure provides for international activities as well as independent operations at the state and local levels (Figure 1). Habitat International is the parent organization that oversees all operations worldwide, especially internationally. State Support Organizations (SSO), like Habitat Oregon (HFHO) are intermediary organizations, of varying size and scope, between HFHI and the local affiliates. SSOs are take their directions from HFHI, but not every state has a SSO. Local affiliates are themselves separate nonprofit entities that operate in cities and towns all over America. As separate nonprofits, they have some level of autonomy, and are not strictly bound by the protocols or wishes of the SSO and HFHI. Affiliates are the ones building the actual housing, from fundraising, acquiring property, recruiting and training volunteers, purchasing or receiving donated building materials. Affiliates provide partner families with educational trainings such as financial literacy or home maintenance prior to offering them no-interest loans and placing them in housing.

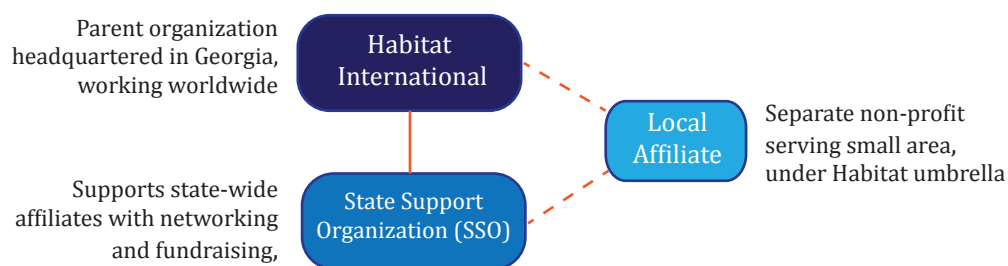


Figure 1: Habitat for Humanity Organizational Structure

The Habitat for Humanity International Disaster Response division is located in Atlanta, Georgia. From there, Habitat organizes and supports response efforts nationwide and across the globe. Habitat for Humanity's Global Disaster Response Policy states that Habitat responds to disasters from its core competency in long-term recovery and sustainable development (Habitat for Humanity International 2012). With this focus, the International organization offers expertise in technical information, program design, and implementation of disaster response policies, protocols and procedures. It also provides support and information resources for hazard risk reduction, or mitigation. It sends specially trained teams to provide emergency shelter and organize long-term recovery housing. After a local disaster in the United States, HFHI may deploy a trained disaster response manager to an affected area to help a local affiliate respond, and start recovery by helping network with external partners and providing logistical and technical assistance. This all would be arranged between HFHI, the affiliate and the SSO, if one was available.

Habitat International has expressed the desire for all local Habitat affiliates to have a disaster preparedness plan in place to address disaster response, business continuity and security, and recovery where appropriate. Affiliates are also asked to incorporate disaster risk reduction strategies into their housing and shelter programs, and to develop housing recovery programs where possible (HFHI Disaster Response Guidelines 2009). Following the lead of international, national and state agency frameworks, Habitat International makes the same recommendations to its local nonprofit affiliates: make plans, collaborate with local agencies, create partnerships and communicate capacities and needs (HFHI Disaster Response Guidelines 2009).

To help facilitate this, the Habitat State Support Organizations help local affiliates with planning resources and templates. Affiliates are asked to find the time and resources to prepare plans and share them with the SSO, who will keep a database of statewide plans. Several Habitat affiliates, especially in the Gulf Coast region and the flood and tornado-prone Midwest, have already increased their planning, recovery and mitigation operations based on this mission and their experiences following storms. For HFHI, there is a growing need to increase the affiliate level of organizational planning in Oregon because of the increased risks to floods, storms, earthquakes and tsunamis. There is also the desire to clarify roles and responsibilities between affiliates and families, and between affiliates and the broader community, including their private sector partners and public emergency response agencies. HFHI would also like to increase their own communications with local affiliates and all SSOs regarding disaster preparedness.

Habitat for Humanity Oregon

Habitat for Humanity Oregon is the State Support Organization that supports the 32 Oregon Habitat affiliates with technical assistance, trainings, fundraising and network opportunities. Habitat Oregon recently located from Salem to Portland. Portland, Oregon was built up around the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers. Over 1.1 million people reside in Multnomah and Clackamas counties. The median income is about \$52,000, with over 16% of people living below the poverty level. Although primarily white, the local residents are multinational and multilingual, with a population density of over 4,300 people per square mile (U.S. Census 2012). The Portland Metro area is known to have multiple hazard risks, including flood, earthquake, hazardous materials failures, even

volcanic eruption and acts of terror. A large natural or man-made disaster would damage the majority of structures, older masonry and wood buildings built before seismic standards. Critical infrastructure like transportation and energy are also left vulnerable in many likely hazard scenarios.

As an SSO, Habitat Oregon does not build houses, but rather works to develop strong relationships with each affiliate, and operates as a liaison between the affiliates and Habitat International. Part of the SSO's mission includes increasing disaster preparedness. Habitat Oregon recognizes the need to front-load disaster planning with affiliates in order to assess capabilities and educate other affiliates through the process. This is the major reason they wanted to partner with this project. The Oregon SSO has very few staff and recognizes that communications with affiliates can be inadequate at times, and so affiliates are not fully aware of the assistance that the SSO can offer. The SSO would like to serve as affiliate's point of contact for disaster planning and response or recovery activities, but needs to improve communications. They hope that a statewide effort to plan for disasters will help change that.

The SSO itself does not currently understand the city or county emergency procedures, or have a working relationship with anyone in emergency management. The SSO would contact HFHI and Oregon VOAD in an emergency. The SSO's response plan would be to first make sure all files were safe, that operating systems were functional, and that communications were functional. Second, they would contact affected affiliates and begin to assess needs. They would then help affiliates organize a response, through HFHI or Oregon VOAD. Currently, Habitat Oregon keeps backups of essential records in the cloud, and has an office emergency kit. They do not know if the building their office is in is seismically sound or not, or in a flood zone. The SSO has a Continuity of Operations plan, but it is in need of updating, especially since relocating. Habitat Oregon recently joined Oregon VOAD, and has just begun participating with that organization.

Habitat Oregon Survey Results

A major task for the Oregon SSO is to assess its affiliate's disaster planning progress. Before this exit project, the SSO had no information on current planning or completed plans. A primary task therefore, was to conduct a survey of affiliates to provide the SSO with baseline information to help them focus their planning assistance to affiliates. The online survey was distributed to 37 affiliates, with 24 affiliates responding, for a 65% response rate.

Affiliate Planning

The survey found that while only one quarter of affiliates had a disaster plan of any kind, and only 10% were working on one, over half were doing other types of planning, such as preparing emergency contact lists, emergency checklists, family preparedness plans, or business continuity plans. For those who had started planning, they usually began only after suffering from a local disaster. For those affiliates not currently planning, 12 faulted a lack of personnel, while 9 faulted a lack of time.

SURVEY RESULTS: AFFILIATE PLANNING	
Affiliates with a disaster plan	25%
Affiliates working on a disaster plan	10%
Affiliates working on plan components	56%
Affiliates not planning because of lack of personnel	60%
Affiliates not planning because of lack of time	40%

Affiliate Hazard Knowledge

No Oregon affiliates indicated that they have ever had to respond to an emergency, which initially indicates a hazard knowledge deficit for the organization. Nineteen affiliates, or over 80%, are unsure if they would ever be called on to assist. The survey also revealed that five affiliates are unsure about their own office location in relation to hazard zones, and nine are in fact located in known hazard zones. Furthermore, over one quarter of affiliates have already built homes in hazard zones, while another 13% don't know if they have or not. Currently only 30% of survey affiliates supply their partner families with any emergency preparedness information, even though almost all responded that they would like to.

SURVEY RESULTS: AFFILIATE HAZARD KNOWLEDGE	
Affiliates who have responded to a disaster	0%
Affiliates unsure if they would assist	80%
Affiliates unsure about office location & hazards	22%
Affiliates who've built homes in hazard zones	26%
Affiliates who provide families with emergency info	30%
Affiliates who do not know emergency responsibilities	39%
Affiliates familiar with local emergency response plans	45%

Affiliate Communications

While seven of affiliates surveyed know who their local emergency manager is, only two have ever spoken with them. The majority of affiliates are not familiar with any local or county response plans. Almost 40% do not know their responsibilities in the event of a local or regional emergency, and only five have documented any kind of roles or responsibilities. About one quarter of affiliates would respond only if their own affiliate was directly affected. In the event of an emergency, 45% of affiliates responded that they would contact local police or fire departments, while only 18% said they would contact Habitat Oregon or Habitat International.

SURVEY RESULTS: AFFILIATE COMMUNICATIONS	
Affiliates who know emergency manager	30%
Affiliates who have spoken to emergency manager	10%
Affiliates who would contact local police or fire	45%
Affiliates who would contact SSO or HFHI	18%

Overall this survey revealed that many affiliates are not doing any emergency planning, and that most have not initiated any contact with local public officials or partners. Many more affiliates desire to plan than have time or personnel to do so. Affiliates also need education about local hazards and planning tools, as well as what may be potential roles and responsibilities in the event of a local emergency. Communications and official emergency

protocols between affiliates and SSO/HFHI are unclear and go virtually unused. Finally, and perhaps most important to note, few partner families are given any preparedness information or emergency instructions during their orientation or when moving in.

Habitat Oregon Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the Habitat Oregon interviews and interviews with emergency managers.

- Have trained leadership that can communicate no matter the disaster situation
- Understand the national ICS system. Consider taking the two-hour online basic course
- Make response process similar to National Response Framework to make it easier for local and state agency interaction
- Develop a statewide communications strategy in case cell towers go down (using HAM radios, for example)
- Research response exercise opportunities to participate in locally
- Complete an SSO Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan, and communicate findings to local emergency managers and HFHI
- Concentrate on Continuity of Operations Planning for affiliates
- Provide an outline disaster planning template and example of plans
- Provide a seminar for disaster planning at regional conference
- Do a webinar or other training session for affiliates
- Provide area- and hazard-specific information to affiliates
- Define affiliate roles, what resources exist through the SSO and how affiliates can ask for help or assistance
- Understand capacities of affiliates around state to help coordinate responses and assistance

Portland/Metro East Affiliate

The Habitat Portland/Metro East affiliate builds homes within Multnomah and northern Clackamas counties. Over the last 30 years, Portland/Metro East has built over 200 homes for low-income families. They serve almost 300 families and manage over 5,000 volunteers, building almost 50 units each year. The units can be stand-alone houses, but more often are part of multi-unit developments in urbanized areas. They currently have property enough to develop 150 units of housing over the next four to five years. The nonprofit operates three Habitat ReStores for material recycling and resale, and has strong relationships with local and national building material suppliers. They are beginning to perform rehabilitation projects for community homeowners, widening their mission and leveraging their volunteer base.

The Portland affiliate has begun with their basic disaster preparedness plan. But they also have some personnel with disaster relief experience. They have sent teams to the Gulf to help following Katrina and Rita in 2005, and have developed, designed, built, shipped and assembled on-site, disaster relief shelters for victims of the Indonesian tsunami in 2004. The affiliate has helped with neighboring affiliates following local floods, but has never had to respond to help their own partner families or community in Portland itself.

Habitat for Humanity Portland/Metro East has limited staff expertise in disasters. They have several staff and volunteers who have helped in Thailand and Haiti, and the current executive director has served with the SSO and understands the need for disaster planning. The affiliate believes it can in fact serve several roles following a disaster. Their greatest strengths are believed to be volunteer mobilization, fundraising, and building good homes and building community. Their intentions for responding include securing everyone's safety and basic needs, including families and office staff, followed by the ReStore personnel and volunteers on build sites. Following the immediate response, they would inventory affected homes, and communicate with official agencies to identify additional roles to play. They would assist families with things like insurance claims and help with cleanup if needed. The ReStores could serve as shelters, and of course, stores for materials and possibly, one day, stockpile prefabricated disaster shelters.

The Portland affiliate identified the need for an improved continuity of operations plan. But they also recognized that it is short on staff time, and needs more leadership to develop and execute a disaster plan. They admit that the previous HFHI Disaster Preparedness Plan template would need to be adjusted to meet their specific needs. Finally, they noted that coordination with the local VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters) is lacking, and that they don't speak often.

Portland Emergency Management

Multnomah County Emergency Management oversees countywide emergency coordination, managing resource requests and allocation. They use the federally mandated Incident Command System (ICS), and the National Recovery Framework. The county Emergency Management Plan helps to coordinate across county agencies, and nonprofits are only mentioned broadly in the document. The basic assumption is that housing nonprofits would assist in emergency shelter and long-term reconstruction. A Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake is perceived as the biggest threat, but the community is poorly prepared for most major incidents. The infrastructure and built environment is not durable enough to withstand an earthquake, and the risk isn't fully understood. The County maintains a nonprofit liaison to assist with coordination, and keeps lines of communication open with Oregon VOAD.

The main challenge for the County is in waiting until after a disaster to coordinate with private agencies. Other issues include managing untrained volunteers, securing seismically sound emergency shelters, and helping low-income residents after a disaster. The perception of Oregon VOAD is that they are still building capacity, and not fully reliable in case of an emergency. Red Cross is the biggest nonprofit who would respond in an emergency. The belief by Emergency Management is that Habitat for Humanity is well positioned to help during recovery, and that the County has the capacity, through the nonprofit liaison, to work with Habitat pre-disaster. They would like to know how the Habitat affiliate would function and serve the needs of its staff, volunteers and families for the first 30 days following a disaster. If they know that the organization can sustain itself, then they have one less organization to worry about. If Habitat can help, they would like to know that, too. If Habitat Portland was trained in the ICS, they could even more effectively assist with response and recovery.

Portland/Metro East Affiliate Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the Portland affiliate interviews and interviews with emergency managers.

- Develop a disaster response plan, and an implementation schedule for the next few years
- Enlist long-term volunteers to help with planning—perhaps a dedicated person
- Contract with someone to do a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and provide feedback on next steps
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding, based on your plan, outlining capacity and self-sufficiency for the first 30 days following a disaster—give to Emergency Management
- Provide a consistent level of effort over time to address ongoing needs
- Get involved in response exercises with the City of Portland and the County
- Coordinate with the County Emergency Management nonprofit liaison
- Provide for CERTs and NETs-trained volunteers
- Develop list of hazard/earthquake retrofits to consider for outreach activities
- Include hazard risk assessment as part of property due diligence
- Provide families with hazard awareness and preparedness information

Lincoln County Affiliate

Habitat for Humanity Lincoln County is located in Newport, Oregon. Just over 46,000 people reside in the entire county, with almost 10,000 of them living in Newport. Median income for Lincoln County is about \$42, 000, with 16% of residents below the poverty level. The residents are mostly white, with a population density for the county at just under 45 people per square mile, with Newport at just over 1,100 people per square mile (U.S. Census 2012).

Lincoln County has over 60 miles of ocean shore and several major rivers, many subject to periodic flooding. Newport is located on the mouth of the Yaquina River and Bay. The biggest threat is chronic winter storms, as well as the possible tsunami. There are many developed areas of coastal Lincoln County and Newport that are within the flood plain and tsunami inundation zone, including Habitat Lincoln County's latest build site. For a worst-case earthquake/tsunami event, many homes, businesses and some critical facilities like police and fire stations and schools would be damaged or destroyed. Ground access in and out of Newport would be easily cut off with just three landslides or road failures on the main highways.

HFH Lincoln County is a very small organization, with three paid staff and a small core of volunteers. Lincoln County builds homes across a wide area along the coast and inland. They build an average of one house per year, and currently have no stockpiles of property to develop. They operate one ReStore in Newport, which generally receives donations from local contractors and residents. Habitat Lincoln County does not currently have any major

building supplier partnerships. They occasionally get donations or discounts from the local hardware stores, but there are no major building supply chains in Newport. One of their principal construction managers volunteers while operating a contracting business fulltime. They have very little property acquired to build on in the future. In fact, the only affordable properties are now mostly in the floodplain. They recently completed a duplex in Waldport, and plan on rehabilitating a two-bedroom home in Steiglitz. They also plan on branching out by doing small rehab projects around the community, as outreach and the broader national mission.

Habitat for Humanity Lincoln County is a small affiliate with no experience responding or recovering from disasters. They believe their greatest strengths are its volunteers, with some of them tied into local response agencies. The affiliate doesn't have a relationship with Oregon VOAD, or any experience with the HFHI disaster response guidelines or planning templates. They assume that Emergency Management will communicate to them the nature of an emergency, and the affiliate would likely contact another nearby affiliate rather than the SSO or HFHI in case help was needed. Following a disaster, they would first assure the safety of staff, the office, the jobsites and the ReStore. Second, they would document the life safety and equipment safety and communicate that to their board and staff. The ReStore could become a gathering place for evacuations. Following the initial response, the affiliate would try and harness its manpower to help with local needs.

The Lincoln County affiliate identified the need for a property assessment checklist that included a hazards assessment, the need to map home locations in relation to hazard zones, and the need for stricter building guidelines for seismic and flood zones. The affiliate does have a working relationship with the Emergency Manager, and would like to strengthen and enhance that communication. As their partner families are housed all over the county, communications with them would be difficult to impossible following a major event. A loss of mortgage income from damaged or destroyed homes would be hard, if not devastating, to the operations of the affiliate. They would like to coordinate more with local housing agencies and shelter services in the area, as well as develop an emergency contact sheet of staff, families and local organizations. They would like to do more disaster planning, but are lacking in time and staff.

Lincoln County Emergency Management

Lincoln County Emergency Management leads the process for countywide emergency operations. They support other agencies and other jurisdictions, such as fire districts, law enforcement, health care, ambulance services, and CERT teams (Community Emergency Response Teams). They use the federally mandated Incident Command System (ICS), and the National Recovery Framework. While the science says that the biggest threat is an earthquake and tsunami, the County is not really doing any planning around those specific hazards. The thought is that they are too big and unstoppable, and that if they happen, then the probable response is going to be large-scale evacuation. Most of the response planning goes to address winter storm threats. Most of the community is seen as being in denial to the bigger threats like tsunamis, with even the major hospital in the area currently located in the tsunami inundation zone.

Just a few people run the Emergency Management department in Newport, it is chronically underfunded, and has its Emergency Operations Center located in a seismically unsound building near the coast. It's admitted that housing would not be a priority following a major disaster due to the extensive damage and need for relocation. Likewise, volunteer management is not a plan that has been sufficiently outlined in the local Emergency Operations Plan.

Emergency Management does not believe Habitat should try and manage housing issues following a disaster, due to the predicted size and scope. Admittedly, past generations did not want to collaborate across sectors, but new generations of leadership in the fire service, emergency management, etc. are paying more attention to hazards and the need to work across disciplines to address the risks.

Lincoln County Affiliate Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the Lincoln County affiliate interviews and interviews with emergency managers.

- Develop a disaster response and recovery plan
- Communicate with county and city response structure first before responding to an emergency
- Have someone trained in the ICS model, so they 'speak the same language' as officials during disaster response
- Develop a checklist or a 'How-to' for volunteer management to assist the County
- Consider helping Emergency Management with distribution systems and people logistics following an emergency
- Coordinate with local community services like the food pantry and transport services
- Consider helping with damage assessments after an event, to help provide an inventory for a disaster declaration
- Consider helping manage individual donations in order to fund county-wide recovery projects (especially if a disaster is not officially declared and no federal funds are provided)
- Coordinate with other housing agencies in County to assign roles and responsibilities
- Develop an emergency contact sheet, including inter-agency contacts
- Develop relationships with other affiliates beyond the tsunami zone in case assistance or relocation help is necessary
- Continue dialogue with County EM to sustain relationship and develop action items

Habitat for Humanity Disaster Plan Template Development

In addition to conducting interviews and the affiliate survey, this project also aimed at producing a working product for disaster planning by Habitat affiliates in the case study areas and statewide. Habitat Oregon had an exiting Disaster Preparedness Plan template, but it was incomplete and poorly organized. Through this project, I was able to revise and update their template to make it more user friendly, and include steps for business

continuity and recovery planning. This template could be modified to suit the needs of any type of nonprofit. While some of the information and sections are specific to Habitat, they could easily be substituted for organization-specific resources. Along with the major findings and recommendations, there is much overlap between nonprofits that serves to build overall community resilience.

Process

Updating the Habitat for Humanity Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan Template first required establishing the partnership with all levels of the Habitat organization. The Oregon SSO was on board from the beginning, recognizing a growing need across Oregon's affiliates. Habitat International, already practiced at responding to disasters worldwide, has noted the need across the country and especially Oregon. With the interest of the Case Study Affiliates in Portland and Lincoln County, disaster planning was seen as needed on the local level as well. I met with Habitat International's director of Disaster Response, and he provided additional advise and support for this effort.

Without starting from scratch, I began by reviewing the existing templates and guidance documents already available from Habitat. These documents were very bare bones, addressing issues such as emergency preparedness, first aid kit creation, emergency call sheets, and some basic business continuity pieces. The organization of the document was not ideal, and many pieces remained blank for the individual SSO or affiliate to fill in with their own plan elements. Through my surveys and interviews it was clear that affiliates stretched thin for money, time and personnel needed a more complete, detailed template that could be completed in stages over time. With additional guidance and feedback from emergency managers and Habitat Oregon, I attempted to fill those gaps with more robust sections and a step-by-step process for additional response and recovery planning activities.

Josh Bruce of the Oregon Partnership for Disaster Resilience provided detailed feedback on my draft template. The completed revised template was then sent to HFHI, the Oregon SSO and the two Case Study Affiliates for review and comments. The template was also presented to over 40 affiliates from the Northwest U.S. region at their annual conference and distributed there for affiliate use.

Results

The revised disaster plan template included several new elements:

- An overview of the disaster cycle
- A discussion on the need to identify particular local hazards and threats
- An updated section on potential roles before and after a disaster occurs
- In depth section on business continuity planning, with fill-in-the-blanks tables
- A new section on writing and delivering a Memorandum of Understanding
- A new section on response planning, including partner family response
- A new section on recovery planning, including considerations before planning for recovery
- A new appendix that includes partner family disaster plan guidance, important Oregon references and organization information to help inform local issues

The plan includes notes and comments for affiliates to customize or amend the template to suit their particular needs. It contains recommendations for personalizing the plan, and comments for where additional needs may arise not addressed by the plan (especially for response and recovery). The plan is easily editable in Microsoft Word, and is made available through the Habitat Oregon website. The new template builds on the old, and is intended to guide an affiliate through the planning process, provide suggestions for additional planning activities, and when completed, act as the disaster plan itself. Thus, the process of planning will produce the actual plan itself; there is no separation between the planning process and the drafting of the plan: they occur simultaneously.

Next Steps

After updating the plan, I presented the final Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan Template at Habitat's 2013 northwest regional conference in Eugene. I provided an overview of the project and template to over 40 affiliates from 3 states during a 20-minute lunchtime presentation, and gave an in-depth discussion of the template to three affiliates during an 1½-hour breakout workshop. At a conference table I provided the webpage link and a QR so attendees could easily download their own copy and begin planning.

Moving forward, the full acceptance and utilization of the Disaster Plan Template will depend on individual affiliate's priorities, time and resources. If the SSO can provide ongoing guidance and assistance with planning steps and content, and work to stay updated to needs and concerns across the state, then the template may have a chance of being effective. As each affiliate customizes their plans, sharing those changes and advances with the Habitat community will help to improve the template's efficacy over time. Understanding each organization's roles and responsibilities, needs and available resources, is key to building a resilient community with a robust response plan. Through planning, Memorandums of Understanding, and participation on committees and in trainings and drills, Habitat for Humanity can dramatically increase their capacity to serve the needs of their community, making their partner families safer, their towns and cities more prepared, and their organization more stable and effective.

Findings & Discussion

This research and case study have produced three major findings that can be applied to the two Habitat case study affiliates, all Habitat for Humanity case study affiliates in Oregon, as well as to housing nonprofits nationwide. Indeed, these recommendations can be used by any nonprofit organization interested in expanding their roles to serve a local or regional need for disaster response or recovery activities. While these findings may at first glance seem straightforward, they represent years of concerted effort for nonprofits and their communities in order to complete them and be as prepared for disasters as possible.

The resilience of a community depends on the resilience of each of its systems, its residents, businesses and organizations. Much of this research focused on housing issues, but nonprofits in other roles are advised to engage in similar disaster preparations, communications and planning activities. Nonprofits in other fields should analyze these findings in order to improve their own operational capacities, organizational preparedness, and client and community communications. A summary table follows each finding which outlines recommendations and responsibilities for the nonprofit, their clients, and for local emergency management.

Finding #1: Housing nonprofits should recognize their potential roles in the emergency management community, drawing on their expertise to help following a disaster.

The Federal Response Framework acknowledges that disaster response is foremost a local operation. Nonprofits serve in critical roles and act as conduit for federal funding after an emergency declaration. Local donations likewise need to be managed by nonprofits, as county emergency management can accept private monies. Nonprofits that specialize in building affordable housing have a particular stake in how disaster response and recovery occurs in their local areas and regions. If a disaster strikes, whether it is a flood, fire, earthquake, chemical spill or tsunami, a major priority for all areas is the safety of people and maintaining people in their houses. Many housing nonprofits serve low-income residents, the elderly and young, non-English speakers, and other vulnerable populations. For federal and local response agencies, these populations have a higher chance of becoming victims that need assistance. As local nonprofits address their role in contributing to disaster response and recovery, each is faced with their own set of complexities to consider. Each must navigate the risks involved and try and mitigate them beforehand.

Housing nonprofits in fact serve a valuable role in disaster response and recovery: building housing. The planning literature explains that housing recovery is key to community recovery. If people are displaced, or homes are damaged, the residents, many that are business owners or the workforce, leave and cannot return until there is housing in place. It is sometimes the case that housing is not replaced quick enough, and populations are permanently decreased, such as in New Orleans following Katrina. While most small, local organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity affiliates, do not recognize this phenomenon as related to their primary missions, they nonetheless should consider the potential that they would be called upon to assist following an emergency. For areas that are at risk to large, local events such as coastal communities facing tsunamis, or inland communities facing

wildfires, this potential is even more heightened. For organizations not acutely threatened, their safety may be the factor that urges them to respond, such as sending supplies or personnel to affected regions, or by receiving refugees or relocating residents.

While large nonprofits such as the Red Cross remain the primary organizations to respond and assist after a disaster, there is evidence that more help has and will be needed for response and recovery activities, especially in areas facing catastrophic events. Increasingly, smaller, more localized nonprofits will be called on for additional help and long-term assistance. Emergency managers acknowledge their extreme limitations following a major event, and recognize the value of small, local nonprofits, with their extended community relations, strong partnerships with suppliers, and responsibility to vulnerable populations. The literature shows many examples of new nonprofits popping up overnight to serve needs in the Gulf following Katrina. Many were very agile and adaptable and were able to help. Some just received donations and were ineffective. Just how much help these organizations can offer depends on what they consider their role and capacity. Following emergencies federal funding for communities will best be used if nonprofits who can use that funding are prepared to act with a plan in place. Without the right organization in place, that funding can go to waste or be put to use in ineffective ways.

Housing nonprofits should first and foremost consider their strengths in rebuilding shelter and housing following a disaster. But these organizations may in fact be able to contribute much more to response activities immediately following a disaster than they realize. Certain activities that relate to the expertise of housing, much needed by overwhelmed emergency responders, can easily be utilized. Some recommended activities that emerged from the case study interviews with emergency managers include getting staff Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training and then participating in local response exercises with first responders. Housing nonprofits could perform mitigation retrofits for houses throughout the community, especially for elderly residents. Following a disaster, nonprofits could perform damage inventories that can be used by cities and counties to obtain federal emergency funding. The skills used to build affordable housing can be used to assist in providing relief shelters and temporary housing. Other potential contributions that were identified in this study include aspects that harness the management skills that housing nonprofits are known for, such as volunteer coordination, fundraising, and contribution management, be it monetary or construction materials. Additionally, those nonprofits with building supply warehouses could leverage this local asset as emergency evacuation sites, donation drop off sites, or for temporary staging of emergency supplies.

But without a doubt, housing nonprofit's greatest strength remains in the recovery activity of rebuilding housing that was damaged or destroyed. This long-term process, while sometimes a byproduct of an organization's original mission of providing affordable housing, has its own particular set of planning and operational needs that should be considered ahead of time. A community that stands to lose large amounts of homes, both affordable and market-rate, in a catastrophic event, will need as much help as possible in rebuilding its built environment and community relations. Local nonprofits that are established in an area can play a large role in this long-term mission, supported by the rest of the response and recovery community, be it emergency managers and government, private corporations, or faith-based non-governmental organizations.

Recommended Action	Responsibility		
<i>Finding 1: Recognize Potential Roles</i>	<i>Nonprofit</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Emergency Mgmt</i>
Research local hazards and provide education	X		X
Participate in local response exercises	X		X
Do training for organizations or clients	X	X	
Understand organizational capacities for response and recovery	X	X	X
Provide community hazard retrofits and preparations	X		
Provide clean up assistance following disaster	X	X	
Provide damage assessments following disaster	X	X	
Provide volunteer coordination following disaster	X		
Provide donation and fundraising management	X		
Include hazards in due diligence for properties	X		
Design and build resilient homes	X		
Join VOAD or Disaster Resilience Team	X		X

Finding #2: Housing nonprofits need to cultivate open lines of communication between their clients, partners, emergency managers and community regarding disaster response and recovery activities.

The federal government and local emergency managers view communication as the critical component of a functional response and recovery operation. Communication needs to occur early and often in order to provide clarity as to roles and responsibilities following a disaster, as well as to build a solid network of organizations that can effectively work together and not duplicate activities or leave vital needs unaddressed. The hardest time to attempt communications is under the extreme duress following a major disaster. According to the Federal Response Framework, emergency managers and responders will be operating using the federally recognized Incident Command System (ICS), and National Incident Management System (NIMS). This is the language that will be spoken during response, and the more community organizations that can speak it the better.

When physical lines of communication are down and response activities are in full swing, players need to already know what they and others are doing. Ideally, communications within a response and recovery community are built and maintained long before a disaster strikes. The planning literature explains the critical importance of joint planning before a disaster. That joint planning comes at all levels, from individuals and families, to organization teams and employees, to cross-organizational planning at the local community level. These bottom up planning and communication activities are where the major lack is in the system. The city, county, state and federal agencies have plans in place and some level of communication system, but not so for the very local level.

For small, local housing nonprofits not accustomed to being in a role of emergency responder, this type of ongoing communication is likely nonexistent. Currently only a few, specialized organizations are part of a local, regional, statewide or national responder community, such as VOAD, Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters. These groups regularly meet with government emergency officials and discuss roles, actions, trainings and activities. Smaller, localized nonprofits, such as Habitat for Humanity affiliates, likely have no seat at the table, or even know that these groups exist. There is also the likelihood that the local organization is unaware of its' parent organization's participation in these activities.

Given the national media attention regarding nonprofits who have stepped up after emergencies like Katrina and Sandy, communities everywhere may likewise assume that local housing nonprofits already have, or will have, the capacity to act, where in reality they currently may not. This may be the biggest conflict in some local areas. These conflicts resolve as lines of communication are opened between all parties. For housing nonprofits, this communication starts at home, and builds up to the level of local government and beyond. These conversations attempt to disclose one's acceptance, willingness, capacity and limitations when it comes to being prepared, or being able to assist in response or recovery operations, both locally and regionally.

When an organization decides to draw on their expertise and recognize the role they can play following a disaster, this decision should be communicated throughout the organization, from board members and executive directors, to staff and volunteers and partners. This begins the dialogue and planning necessary to prepare to act. Including this as part of an organization's mission will help communicate that role to the wider audience, making it a priority for time, resources and funding. Identifying an organization's major risks and vulnerabilities, be they physical (office location or structural stability), technological (data and file security), or personal (staff safety and training), will help to communicate the urgency needed to act and prepare.

The next important step is to communicate this role to the people the organization serves: the clients, the homeowners, and the partner-families. These people may be the ones most at risk from a disaster, and so must themselves become as informed and prepared as possible. Many organizations are themselves unaware of the hazards they may be facing, or the steps to take to respond to such an event. Likewise, families and clients may be unaware of the threats to their homes, families and communities. This needs to be researched and communicated as part of an organization's due diligence activities: where people are living in relation to known hazard zones. Emergency preparedness materials should be a standard part of homeowner education, including home emergency kit checklists, local hazard information, evacuation maps, and organizational emergency contacts. Ensuring the safety of the people one serves should be of paramount importance.

Communications within an organization are only the first step in cultivating a prepared community. As housing nonprofits prepare to assume larger roles in a community following an emergency, communicating those roles to other organizations is critical. Interviews with emergency managers recommended that parent organizations, VOAD

groups, and partner suppliers should all be part of the dialogue regarding potential emergency activities. These broader organizations can provide critical advice, information to ensure that actions are not being replicated, or resources not being wasted. Local nonprofits may choose to serve or create committees for disaster response and recovery (such as Long Term Recovery Groups), where information can be shared, organizations can assign roles, and new needs and resources can be identified beforehand.

A final major issue in building communications and dialogue concerns developing a strong relationship with one local emergency manager. These are the people who are primarily responsible for a local, county or regional response to a disaster. They will likely be in charge, dealing with everything from response and evacuation, to preparing for long term recovery. Their job is made easier if they know beforehand what organizations have planned for response and recovery. According to case study interviews, they would like to know who will be an asset and who may be a liability. As housing nonprofits begin the community dialogue, emergency managers should be near the top of their list to speak with, from explaining your intent to expand your mission and role, to advising them of your actual capacity to survive, protect your clients, or assist. If emergency managers are not in pre-disaster contact with an organization, either directly or through a nonprofit community liaison, then the manager's assumption is likely that the organization will not contribute after an emergency, and may even need assistance. For emergency management to know that an organization has a plan to take care of their own or help others, then that plan should be communicated through some form of Memorandum of Understanding to emergency management. That in itself will go a long way towards contributing to the overall community response after a disaster.

Communications between emergency managers and housing nonprofits of course have to be a two-way street. Currently, the assumptions from many nonprofits are that emergency management is doing their job, and will respond appropriately following a disaster: if help is needed, officials will contact nonprofits and ask for their help. However, this may not be the case. Many areas are underfunded and understaffed, and many emergency managers admit that the first 30 days following a major event will likely be chaotic and messy. Their resources will be stretched thin, and vital facilities and services will be the focus of response efforts.

This fact has not been very widely communicated by officials, for obvious reasons. It is therefore recommended that emergency managers lead the charge in establishing communication lines with vital local nonprofit organizations, letting them know of any needs they may have, and offer assistance in planning activities. Emergency Operations Plans and protocols could be more widely distributed to include local nonprofits, so that they may understand official response. Training in ICS for nonprofits, offered through local response agencies, would help everyone speak the same language. If more organizations were made fully aware of the need that may exist should a catastrophe occur, then they would have the opportunity to properly prepare operations and personnel to meet that need, rather than having to respond without those preparations and plans, but respond nonetheless.

Recommended Action	Responsibility		
<i>Finding 2: Cultivate Open Lines of Communication</i>	<i>Nonprofit</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Emergency Mgmt</i>
Become trained in CERT, ICS, NIMS	X		
Develop backup communications strategy (HAM radios)	X		X
Define communication protocol for community	X	X	X
Develop communications between EM and nonprofits	X		X
Coordinate with other local agencies and assign roles	X		X
Develop emergency contact sheets and share with EM	X		
Communicate with sister agencies outside of area	X		X
Increase communications within nonprofit organization	X		
Complete a Memorandum of Understanding between agencies	X		X

Finding #3: Housing nonprofits should prioritize disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning as the major step towards protecting their organization and effectively participating in the emergency management community.

Planning for disaster response and recovery has been universally recommended throughout this research as a way to increase the effectiveness of response and recovery. The Federal Response Framework reveals that impacts and losses can be reduced if a community or organization is prepared. If local housing nonprofits wish to increase their roles and responsibilities following disasters, then the primary step would be to complete a disaster plan prior to a disaster. Through the activity of planning, organizations can assess their current and projected capacities, prepare their offices, staff and partner families for emergencies, and plan for wider response and recovery operations. They then can communicate with their local emergency management department and response organizations regarding their preparations and plans. By performing this critical step of disaster planning, organizational response effectiveness should increase. Likewise, the response and recovery community of their local area or region should also increase in effectiveness. Federal emergency funds can more easily get into the hands of those organizations capable of putting it to effective use.

Regardless of the capacity of each affiliate to help, each affiliate must begin by assuring that they have planned and prepared for the worst case scenario and how it will affect the life safety of the people they work with and the partner families they assist. Interviews with case study emergency managers recommended that organizations first focus on being safe themselves, so that they can hopefully have fewer victims to assist. The planning literature captures the expectation that local nonprofits will have planned and be ready to respond. Following Katrina, with the inept federal response, communities turned in desperation to their local nonprofits, many of whom stepped up to the challenge. But to actually be prepared to do this type of work involves a lot of preparations. The first step for housing

nonprofits, such as Habitat affiliates, is to perform emergency preparedness planning. This starts with their staff, family and volunteer safety, personal safety and the safety of the organization's staff and clients being paramount. Preparedness plans that include first aid kit checklists, evacuation procedures, gas and water shutoff procedures, and emergency contact lists should be compiled and distributed to all households and offices.

Following these preparations should be the planning for the continuity of an organization's operations, or business continuity. Documenting an organization's assets, inventory, IT systems, data locations, and alternate office locations will help in getting back to work quicker should a disaster affect the organization's space. Having all of one's systems and vital information backed-up offsite and in multiple locations will help as well. Keeping emergency contact lists, client numbers, and disaster plans all in one place will make responding to a disaster amidst possible chaos easier and more effective.

Beyond this, affiliates have to engage in longer term response and recovery planning exercises to determine if they have extra capacity to assist in actual response, or if they will only step in when it is safe to begin long term recovery through building houses. As mentioned above, this planning process will analyze the organization, its resources and partnerships, and assess if they can expand their role and mission to include additional services should the need arise. Can the organization help with volunteer management, fundraising, material supplies, or relief shelters? Can the organization respond and rebuild its own partner-family's homes, or will it need outside assistance? Can the organization temporarily house refugees from outside the area, or help relocate families locally? A team that can follow through with the time-commitment as well as the communications commitment necessary to produce a robust and vital document should conduct this planning process. These plans should then be shared with the community, in part or whole, and expressed in a Memorandum of Understanding with their emergency managers.

A final vital aspect to the planning process is testing and exercising one's plan. Through structured scenarios, communities can test their plans individually and collectively, and see how their staff, families and volunteers might perform in the face of different hazards. Evacuation plans can be attempted, with time to amend them if need be. Through participation in local trainings (such as C.E.R.T.) and drills for disasters, organizations can become familiar with the emergency management system and see where their strengths may best be put to use. If nonprofits can identify additional capacities following these types of trainings, then those would also be communicated to their organization and to the local emergency management, in order to help increase response and recovery.

Recommended Action	Responsibility		
<i>Finding 3: Prioritize Disaster Planning Activities</i>	<i>Nonprofit</i>	<i>Client</i>	<i>Emergency Mgmt</i>
Appoint lead person for planning activities	X		X
Use planning template to assist in documentation	X		
Perform business continuity planning	X		
Perform life safety planning	X	X	
Develop response and recovery plan	X		X
Provide updates to planning templates and protocol	X		X

Conclusion

The resilience of a community lies in how it responds and recovers from a major disaster or emergency. The health of the systems, be they infrastructural, economic, or social, helps determine how big an impact a community will suffer in a disaster. Some communities will have higher resilience, not be as affected, and bounce back faster, possibly taking on new forms and organization in the process. Other communities will have lower resilience or face greater risks, and won't be as adaptable. The latter communities will have a harder time responding and recovering. Their lifelines could be cut off, their economies or peoples displaced, and they will have to harness all their resources, and count on help from the outside. In these scenarios, a community needs to have as many people and organizations helping collectively to respond and recover. This need is not limited to just housing focused nonprofits, but applies to all nonprofits, non-governmental organizations, and local or regional businesses that could possibly serve a role in the recovery of a community.

Preparations are key for building community resilience. Education and the act of getting ready help to instill awareness and concern in a community. The act of disaster planning is not just a solitary activity. Organizations must communicate throughout their community to ensure a robust response. Through the process of disaster planning, especially by nonprofits serving vulnerable populations, this level of local and regional resilience can increase. Discussions about roles and responsibilities will create a community dialogue about the threats, the alternatives for action, and the best steps forward. Hazard planning and resilience planning can go hand in hand in communities, especially small, rural, coastal communities where threats are high and resources fewer. The benefits of disaster planning and resilience preparations are not simply long term. Efforts to expand communications, strengthen vital systems and sectors, and create backup plans for critical services have immediate results for the organizations and the community. With more nonprofits performing vital disaster planning, communicating those plans, capacities, and needs to the wider emergency network, a community can respond more quickly to get people back into homes, rebuild their neighborhoods, and recover their livelihoods.

This research project has utilized the case study of Habitat for Humanity, an international organization, but focused mainly on the state and local level. The research has shown that

whereas an organization can accomplish great things in countries all over the world, many gaps and needs still exist where it counts most at the local level. In areas with new or growing threats, coupled with diminished resources at the state, county and municipal level, small local nonprofits such as Habitat affiliates may very well find themselves responding to large scale disasters someday. The state of Oregon has just recently realized the immense threats it's faced with in the form of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and resulting tsunami. Most communities in the state, whether coastal or not, will be affected by such an event, and are as of now woefully ill-prepared. Whether communities can get prepared in time may be determined by their ability to follow through with disaster preparedness planning activities. Regardless, the emergency management organizations agree that nonprofits such as Habitat can serve vital roles in helping their communities after disasters, that they have critical skillsets that need to be bolstered and built on in order to have them ready to respond if need be. Disaster planning will help identify those capacities and areas that need improvement. Through planning, a community builds open communications around the local threats and response capacities so vital to an area's preparedness, resilience, and in some cases, survival.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Works Cited

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