

# COMING OUT OF THE DARK: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN FOR FARMWORKER COMMUNITIES IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY



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*Coming Out of the Dark: Emergency Preparedness Plan for Farmworkers in San Diego County*, is a project of the Farmworker CARE Coalition. The mission of the coalition is to “recognize farmworkers as a vibrant part of the community and to improve their living, working and health conditions, and access to health, social and educational services through empowerment, advocacy, and coordinated efforts.”

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We would also like to acknowledge members of the Farmworker CARE Coalition for their involvement in the creation of this plan and long term commitment to its implementation. Coalition partners include:

- ❖ Agriculture Weights and Measures County of San Diego
- ❖ American Friends Service Committee
- ❖ American Red Cross
- ❖ California Rural Legal Assistance
- ❖ Center for Social Advocacy
- ❖ Coalition for Peace and Justice (Vista)
- ❖ Community Housing Works
- ❖ CSUSM Anthropology Department
- ❖ Fallbrook Family Health Center
- ❖ Frente Indígena de Organizaciones Binacionales
- ❖ Health Initiative of the Americas
- ❖ Interfaith Community Services
- ❖ Mexican Consulate in San Diego
- ❖ Migrant Education - San Diego County Office of Education
- ❖ Mission San Antonio de Pala
- ❖ National Latino Research Center
- ❖ Neighborhood Health
- ❖ North County Health Services
- ❖ Office of Emergency Services San Diego County
- ❖ Poder Popular en San Diego
- ❖ Paradise Community Services
- ❖ Planned Parenthood-San Diego and Imperial Counties
- ❖ Project Concern International
- ❖ US-Mexico Border Program
- ❖ Vista Community Clinic
- ❖ Vista Human Rights Committee

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

### FARMWORKER CARE COALITION

The Farmworker CARE (Coordination/ Communication, Advocacy/ Access, Research/ Resources, Empowerment/ Education) coalition is a collaborative of farmworkers, agencies and community based organizations dedicated to improving the living and working conditions of agricultural workers in north San Diego County, California. The coalition is currently comprised of representatives, leaders and advocates from the local community, the university, health and social service agencies, community based organizations, national, state and local governmental agencies, and faith-based organizations.

The CARE Coalition was formed in July 2004 to bring together agencies serving agricultural workers to outline a process for addressing health and well-being of agricultural workers and their families in the North County region. Previous farmworker-focused collaborative efforts in North San Diego County were limited exclusively to short-term coordination of services that did not address broader economic, political, environmental and social realities in which agricultural workers live and work. However, after careful analysis of farmworker needs, it became evident that they are a vulnerable population with unique needs and challenges. Hence, in fall 2004, the coalition began to outline a mission and vision. The NLRC, selected by the group to lead the planning process, began coordinating the coalition's monthly meetings. The National Latino Research Center (NLRC) facilitated strategic planning to identify a set of short- and long-term goals and objectives. Among the objectives the group identified included coalition coordination, advocacy, research, and farmworker empowerment. The coalition outlined an infrastructure and developed a plan of action to expand group membership. The coalition also prioritized the need to include representatives from the agricultural sector including farmworkers as part of the planning process.

The Farmworker CARE Coalition has compiled an inventory of research on local and statewide agricultural worker health. Additionally, coalition members have assessed the working and living conditions of agricultural workers through research and have facilitated coordination of services through partnership on grants and regional collaborative projects.

During the wildfires in 2007, the Farmworker CARE Coalition provided the organizing and coordinating infrastructure to reach and deliver emergency relief to farmworker communities. The Coalition leveraged over \$500,000 dollars to rebuild housing, cover health care expenses, provide rental assistance, and meet immediate food and clothing needs of farmworkers and their families affected by the fires.

In 2005 the **Farmworker CARE Coalition** received a grant from The California Endowment for *Poder Popular para la Salud del Pueblo*, a community-building initiative aimed at supporting healthy conditions in the fields, communities, health care, media and civic life in ten of the state's agricultural areas (Napa/Sonoma, Merced, West of Fresno County, South Kern, Oxnard/Plain, East Coachella Valley, North San Diego County, North Sacramento Valley and Tulare and Monterey County counties).

The purpose of the project is to improve the health, living and working conditions of agricultural workers by strengthening and engaging grassroots leadership utilizing "Promotores Comunitarios" (Community Health Promoters or leaders) in North San Diego County. The goals of the project include increasing the local health knowledge base, developing individual and organizational leadership and advocacy capacity to improve the long term health of agricultural workers through systems change. Community leaders were

instrumental in assessing community needs and in the distribution of relief supplies to farmworker communities both during and after the fires.

#### **VISTA COMMUNITY CLINIC**

Vista Community Clinic, the regional safety net for uninsured and low-income north San Diego County residents, was founded in 1972 as a freestanding, community controlled, non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. The mission of Vista Community Clinic is “*to provide quality health care and health education to the community focusing on those facing economic, social or cultural barriers.*” Vista Community Clinic, an urban Community Health Center with five service delivery sites located in the cities of Vista and Oceanside, CA, received its 330(e) designation in 2002. From its original donated space in a local animal shelter, VCC has grown into five community clinic sites. Vista Community Clinic uses elements of community health organizing in many of its programs. In particular, VCC relies heavily upon engagement of target population members in the development and evaluation of health promotion programming; on advisory committees to ensure the relevance and cultural competency of interventions; and as trained *promotores* or teen peer leaders in order to disseminate health education messages as trusted members of the target populations. Other strategies VCC uses to increase health access to the underserved include enabling strategies such as outreach, field based health screening and transportation assistance.

#### **NATIONAL LATINO RESEARCH CENTER**

Under the auspices of the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects at California State University, San Marcos and fiscally managed by the CSUSM Foundation, the National Latino Research Center (NLRC) was founded in 1998 with the mission of promoting research, education, and the exchange of information related to Latino and under-served populations in the United States.

Specializing in applied research, the NLRC brings together faculty, students, community, and other professional staff to work on topics related to health, education, community engagement, and economic development.

The NLRC provides a range of services designed to address needs of researchers, academic institutions, public agencies, private corporations and community-based organizations. Its applied research-based services include culturally competent program evaluations, needs assessments, surveys, gap analyses, bilingual and culturally competent focus groups, literature reviews, practitioner-oriented reports, demographic fact sheets and training manuals. The NLRC also develops and conducts trainings at the community level that provide facilitation, capacity building, strategic planning, professional development and results-oriented accountability.

## FOREWORD

In the wake of the wildfires that ravaged southern California in fall of 2007, I found myself stepping outside of the role of researcher and administrator of farmworker health projects in north county San Diego and into the role of activist and advocate for a portion of the San Diego community that was left in the dark during the wildfire evacuation and recovery processes. After a week of watching how farmworkers and their families were either excluded from or tossed around the system I wrote the following editorial that was disseminated through email across the nation.

*I'm not going to give you the Katie Couric version of the evacuations here in San Diego. That version has already been packaged, shown and made into musical montages and played and seen on local media. Instead, this version of the evacuations tells that of the thousands of farmworkers and their families that live at the seams of our society. People who live at the seams of society play an important role in keeping that society together, at the same time, when the fabric of society starts to unravel, they are the most affected.*

*Farmworkers hold together a \$1.4 billion agricultural industry in San Diego. Yet, during the fire storms of 2007, they were the last to be evacuated, often the first to return to work, and were segregated and excluded from humanitarian aid. I heard countless news stories about the fate of local horses as they were evacuated and taken care of during and after the fires. I heard nothing of the fate of thousands of farmworkers and their families.*

*Media messages regarding this disaster systematically excluded migrants only to later label them looters, criminals and illegal aliens. Law enforcement and border patrol systematically prevented farmworkers and their families from evacuating and seeking aid the past week. The evidence of inequality lies in the multitude of testimonies emerging from the ashes of local farms, camps, trailer parks, and evacuation centers: Farmworkers in Carmel Valley continued to work despite the mandatory evacuation orders; a young boy received warning of the approaching fire after waking up to witness a river of fire streaming toward his trailer in Rincon; Latino farmworkers were evacuated into a local high school gym while tribal members remained in the rooms at the local casino; a local family delayed evacuating their trailer until the last possible minute on the reservation because the border patrol was sitting outside their home during the evacuation. The list goes on.*

*Now, in trailers and evacuation centers, there are countless farmworkers and their families that FEMA won't reach; a young couple with two children and one on the way have lost everything they owned: their trailer, car, clothes, and photos. Families living in Rice Canyon are paralyzed in their homes without access to food and water due to the intense presence of the migra, or border patrol that continues to terrorize the community. Qualcomm massages and cots were not accessible to the countless immigrant communities that learned once again that they live at the seams of this society, a society which has once again unraveled to reveal true hypocrisy, inhumanity and structural violence that plagues us all.*

As a researcher and activist it is my aim that the collaborative effort represented in this document serves as a testament to our commitment towards justice, inclusiveness and transparency. Finally, may *Coming Out of the Dark...* be the first step in ensuring that the type of structural violence that impacted the farmworker community during the devastating tragedy does not repeat itself.

Sincerely, Konane M. Martinez  
Chair of the Farmworker CARE Coalition, December 2009



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2007 devastating wildfires engulfed 368,316 acres and destroyed 1,751 homes and businesses in San Diego County.<sup>1</sup> For vulnerable communities, such as farmworkers, the disaster had a devastating and long term impact upon their livelihoods. The Farmworker CARE Coalition witnessed to the exclusive nature of how emergency information was disseminated and relief services provided and immediately committed to creating an emergency plan specific to this community. With funding from the Tides foundation and the San Diego Foundation, Vista Community Clinic commissioned the National Latino Research Center at California State University San Marcos to draft a preparedness plan to be implemented and shared among coalition agencies in collaboration with local governmental and private agencies working in emergency preparedness and response. The result of this process to date is presented in this document.

Based upon the experience of the coalition during the wildfires of 2007, the technical expertise provided to the research team, and the lessons learned from the literature review, we have established the following initial goals for the Emergency Preparedness plan for farmworkers in San Diego County.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan for the Farmworker CARE Coalition can be divided down into six main strategies:

### **Strategy I-Community Involvement and Networking**

Train and increase the capacity of the local farmworker community in areas emergency preparedness and relief.

- a. Create an Emergency Preparedness Curriculum to be delivered by trained community leaders.
- b. Create a comité or network of community liaisons dedicated to deliver information about evacuations and relief resources in the event of an emergency.
- c. Strengthen the linkages of comités/ networks to agencies on the coalition as well as with emergency and first responder agencies.

### **Strategy II-Partnerships**

Build the membership of the coalition through involving more agencies and creating new partnerships.

- a. Build the membership of the coalition as a way to build our capacity in meeting the needs of the farmworker community during an emergency.
- b. Create and maintain partnerships between the Farmworker CARE Coalition and outside agencies.
- c. Establish partnerships with local churches to create "safe havens" that will act as temporary evacuation points specifically for farmworkers in the event of an emergency.
- d. Work with ethnic media-radio, television, print-to build their capacity to serve the farmworker community during times of emergency.

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<sup>1</sup> Dave, D. (2007, December 22). "SANDAG agrees to pursue wider assault on excess brush." *North County Times*.

### **Strategy III-Advocacy**

Create an advocacy plan for the coalition with the aim of increasing awareness among agencies and improve their capacity to design messages, materials and resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for farmworker communities. Involvement by the coalition in local, state and national related to provision of services to vulnerable community services is also of utmost importance.

- a. Create an educational session about farmworkers in San Diego County that can be given to local partners in emergency services as well as relief agencies.
- b. The Coalition will advocate at local, state and national levels for policy related to improving access to emergency preparedness information, resources and relief for vulnerable communities like farmworkers.

### **Strategy IV-Assets**

The coalition will build its knowledge and of crucial assets that can be accessed in case of an emergency.

- a. The coalition will develop and regularly update an asset matrix of agencies that can be resources in the event of an emergency
- b. The coalition will build these assets into the Incident Command System Structure (ICS) structure as described in Strategy V below. Assets will be critical to be able to be accessed by both the coalition and community residents who form part of the ICS.

### **Strategy V-Capacity**

The fifth strategy is that the Farmworker CARE Coalition will work to build its own capacity to respond to emergencies impacting farmworker families.

- a. First goal within this strategy is to create and maintain a database of the major neighborhoods, migrant camps and trailer parks where farmworkers live the will inform the Incident Command Structure (ICS-see below) of the coalition and ensure that information and resources are available in these areas both during and following an emergency.
- b. Research and Assess the capacity of health care systems such as clinics and hospitals to meet the health care needs of farmworkers during emergencies.
- c. The third and most cumbersome task involved in this strategy is to create and implement an Incident Command Structure following the federal NIMS disaster system for the coalition that will ensure a comprehensive, timely and organized response to any emergency.

### **Strategy VI-Plan Awareness and Buy-In**

Finally, the Coalition will work to implement this plan on a county level by spreading awareness and gaining the buy-in of first and second responders as well as crucial governmental and nonprofit organizations that coordinate emergency and disaster response in the County. The awareness and buy in by these entities are critical to the plans effectiveness.

## INTRODUCTION

In 2007 devastating wildfires in California engulfed 368,316 acres and destroyed 1,751 homes and businesses in San Diego County.<sup>2</sup> For vulnerable communities such as farmworkers the disaster had a devastating and long term impact upon their livelihoods. The Farmworker CARE Coalition witnessed the exclusive nature of how emergency information was disseminated and relief services provided and immediately committed to creating an emergency plan specific to this community. With funding from the Tides foundation and the San Diego Foundation, Vista Community Clinic commissioned the National Latino Research Center at California State University San Marcos to draft a preparedness plan to be implemented and shared among coalition agencies in collaboration with local governmental and private agencies working in emergency preparedness and response. The result of this process to date is presented in this document.

The first section of the report provides essential background of the Latino and farmworker community in the region. This section is followed by a summary of the impact of the fires upon the farmworker community and how the experience has helped to shape the Emergency Preparedness Plan. The second section provides a description of the methodology guiding the process as well as a review of decades of research regarding the impacts of disaster on vulnerable communities such as farmworkers. The literature review is instrumental in helping the research team design the Emergency Preparedness Plan described in the final section of the report. The report also includes instrumental appendices relevant to the plan that can serve as key resources for similar efforts in the areas of emergency planning for vulnerable communities such as farmworkers.

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<sup>2</sup> Dave, D. (2007, December 22). "SANDAG agrees to pursue wider assault on excess brush." *North County Times*.

## COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

### SAN DIEGO COUNTY

San Diego County is the sixth most populated county in the United States and the second most populated in California with an estimated 2.8 million residents. Between 1990 and 2000 the County's population increased by more than 11 percent, further increasing the diversity of the region (2000 U.S. Census). It is located in the Southwest corner of the state and is bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west, Imperial County to the east, the U.S.-Mexico border to the south, and Orange and Riverside counties to the north.

According to the 2000 US Census, there were 750,965 Latinos, mostly Mexican, in the San Diego region, representing 26.7 percent of the total population. The population increase of 240,000 persons between 1990 and 2000 represents 76 percent of the region's growth (316,000) in the 10 year period. Fifty-five percent of the county's residents are White while over one-quarter (27%) are Latino. The remaining 18 percent are Asian (9%), Black (5%), American Indian or Alaskan Native (1%), Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.4%), or two or more ethnicities (3%).

Latinos are highly concentrated (65%) in the Southwest region of San Diego, including Southeastern San Diego, National City, Chula Vista, and the San Ysidro border area. However, their numbers increased greatly in North San Diego County during the 1990s.

FIGURE 1: MAP OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

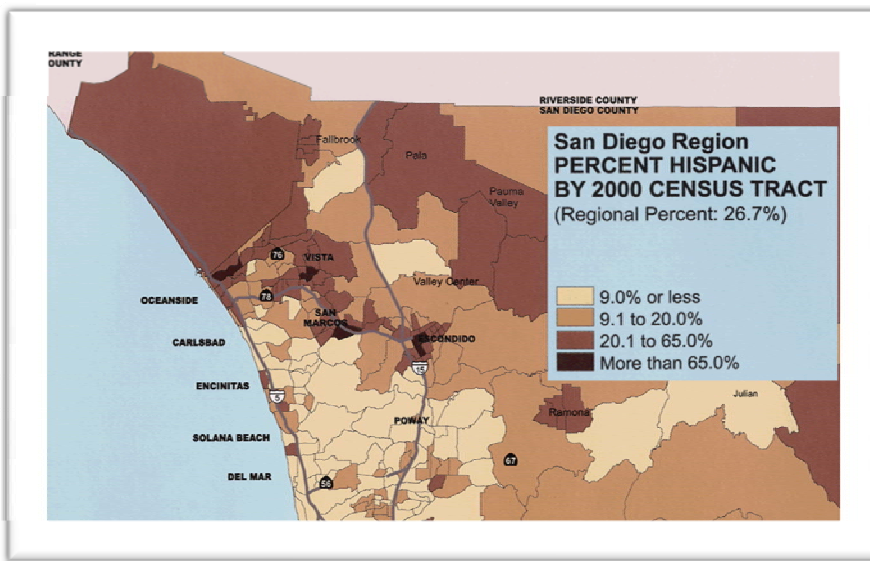


## NORTH SAN DIEGO COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

**North San Diego County** (locally referred to as North County) is one of the most rapidly growing regions in the country encompassing 19 unique communities stretching nearly 2,000 square miles of rugged and vast valleys, mountain towns and beaches. The region includes the cities along Interstates 5, 15 and Highway 78 including Oceanside, Carlsbad, Vista, San Marcos, Escondido, Fallbrook, Encinitas, Poway, Rancho Bernardo, Scripps Ranch, Solana Beach, Cardiff-by-the-Sea, Del Mar, Carmel Valley, Rancho Santa Fe, Ramona, Valley Center, and other unincorporated communities.

North County's population consists of predominantly White and Latino residents followed by Asians, Blacks, and American Indians. In several North County communities, the Latino population nearly doubled

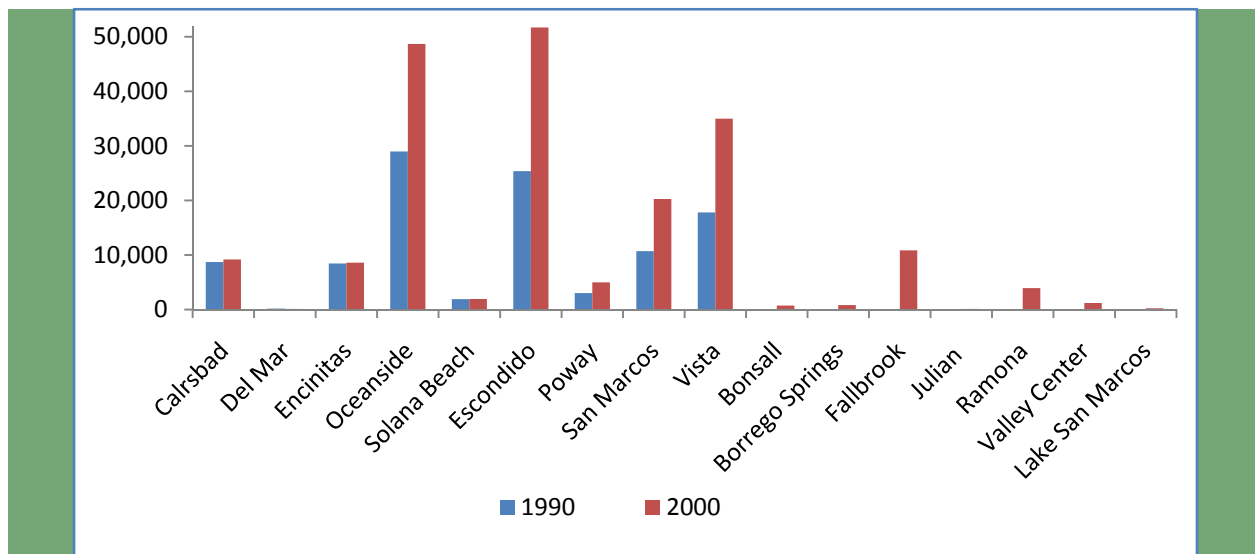
**FIGURE 2: LATINO POPULATION IN NORTH COUNTY**



over the last 10 years. The cities of Oceanside, Vista, Escondido, San Marcos (78 Corridor) and Fallbrook have the greatest ethnic and linguistic diversity in North County. Latinos represent 27% of the population in North San Diego County. According to the 2000 US Census, the Latino population grew from 23% in 1990 to 39% in Escondido. In the city of Vista it grew from 25% to 39%, a total percent change of 96.5%. San Marcos experienced an 89.4% change in the Latino population from

27% to 37%. In Oceanside, the Latino population grew from 23% to 30% of the total population; a 68% change.

**FIGURE 3: LATINO POPULATION 1990 – 2000 (US CENSUS 2000)**



Along the Highway 78 Corridor, Latinos comprise 32% of the population, a higher population than the rest of the county (27%). The majority of Latinos in this region of North County are of Mexican origin (85%), 85%, 1.7% are Puerto Rican and <1% are Cuban (US Census 2000).

Ethnic and cultural trends are important considerations for service providers to consider when designing programs and interventions to serve the large and growing Latino population in North San Diego County. Although the exact number of Latino farmworkers and migrants is unknown, they comprise a substantial sector of the Latino population in San Diego County.

## FARMWORKERS IN NORTH COUNTY SAN DIEGO

San Diego's 1.4 billion dollar agricultural industry employs approximately 24, 570 farmworkers in San Diego County.<sup>3</sup> Immigrants, primarily from Mexico, and their families subsidize the county's fourth largest industry and bear the cost of low wages, lack of mobility and limited access to health and social services. Poverty, overcrowded housing, discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiment make life in San Diego for farmworkers and their families challenging at best.

Socioeconomic and health disparities exist for farmworkers statewide and locally. The following indicators paint a picture of these disparities:<sup>4</sup>

- ✚ The median annual income for farmworkers in California is \$7,500-\$9,999.
- ✚ In 2000, 70% of farmworkers in California lacked health insurance.
- ✚ One in five male farmworkers has two of three risk factors for chronic disease: high serum cholesterol, high blood pressure or obesity.
- ✚ 31% of male farmworkers interviewed in 2000 stated that they had never been to a doctor or a clinic.
- ✚ The median educational attainment for farmworkers falls between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Vista.
- ✚ 87% of the dwellings inhabited by farmworkers in Vista are shared by two or more households with an average of 7.5 persons per room. This figure is higher than the statewide farmworker average of 4.3 persons per room.
- ✚ 96% of farmworkers in Vista report not having health insurance.
- ✚ 28% of farmworkers in Vista report never having been to a doctor; 64% of Vista farmworkers have never been to a dentist.
- ✚ 33% of farmworkers in Vista qualify as obese as measured by the Body Mass Index.
- ✚ 23% of farmworkers surveyed in Vista have high blood pressure.<sup>5</sup>
- ✚ The California Agricultural Worker Survey found that 49% of the workers interviewed were undocumented.<sup>6</sup>
- ✚ Poder Popular community leaders in Fallbrook have identified safety, transportation, gangs, pesticide exposure, access to healthcare and economic insecurity as the most pressing issues in the community.

The scarcity of affordable housing combined with poverty has resulted in many farmworker and migrant families seeking housing on local Indian reservations in San Diego County. Several reservations have communities of Latinos living among tribal communities. Inter-ethnic relations between the two communities are tense at best. This tension between the two groups is palpable and adds to an already stressful situation for many Latino families on the reservation.

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<sup>3</sup> Bade, B. "Farmworker Health in Vista, California." *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, UCSD. La Jolla, CA 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Villarejo et al. *Suffering in Silence: A report on the Health of California's Agricultural Workers*. California Institute for Rural Studies, November 2000; Bade, B. "Farmworker Health in Vista, California." *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, UCSD. La Jolla, CA 2005.

<sup>5</sup> B. Bade, "Farmworker Health in Vista, California." *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, UCSD.

<sup>6</sup> Fear of deportation combined with an already tense relationship between residents and local law enforcement makes life for many farmworkers full of tension and stress.

Farmworkers and migrants in this region live in some of the worst conditions encountered in San Diego County. Families occupy scattered and dilapidated trailers that more often than not lack access to running water, drainage and/or electricity. Community leaders from Poder Popular are working to improve the housing condition through advocacy and partnership with local land owners and tribal members.

North San Diego County has a large and growing indigenous Mexican community. Several studies indicate that indigenous farmworkers from states of southern Mexico, specifically the states of Oaxaca, Puebla and Guerrero, are the newest and fastest growing sources of labor entering California agriculture.<sup>7</sup> Economic, cultural, linguistic, organizational and structural barriers inhibiting healthy access and utilization of services by indigenous farmworkers and their families have been documented anecdotally and ethnographically.<sup>8</sup>

Data indicates that farmworkers from Mexico's southern states where many indigenous immigrants originate suffer the worst conditions and have the lowest incomes. The combined impact of these barriers contributes to drastic disparities negatively impacting the health and welfare of indigenous farmworkers and their families.

Prior to the firestorms, farmworker families had been adversely affected by lack of work resulting from the freeze in January of 2007 that severely damaged the agricultural industry in San Diego. The fires compounded the precarious situation farmworkers regularly face living in North San Diego County.

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<sup>7</sup> Runsten, D. and M. Kearney, "A Survey of Oaxacan Village Networks in California Agriculture." CIRS, 1994; Runsten, D. "Origins and Characteristics of Mexican Migrants in San Diego: Evidence from the Matriculas Consulares." *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, US-MEX, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Martinez, K. et al. "Salir Adelante—Getting Ahead: Recent Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County." *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, UCSD. La Jolla, CA 2005. Bade, B. "Farmworker Health in Vista, California." *Ties That Bind: Mexican Immigrants in San Diego County*, Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, UCSD. La Jolla, CA 2005. Martinez, K. *Health Across Borders: Mixtec Transnational Communities and Clinical Health Care Systems*. Doctoral dissertation, University of California Riverside, 2005.



## WILDFIRES OF 2007

While local and national media sources covered large relief efforts like those held at Qualcomm Stadium, they neglected the thousands of Latino farmworker and migrant families who were impacted by the fires in rural and unincorporated regions of San Diego County.

Commissioned by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's office, the National Latino Research Center published *San Diego Firestorm 2007*, a report that documented the fire impacts on farmworkers and migrants in North San Diego County. Research findings suggest that during and immediately following the firestorms, farmworkers and migrants in North San Diego County were negatively impacted by the fires and in some cases encountered structural and institutional barriers in accessing information and relief efforts. Farmworkers' and migrants' socio-economic situation is usually precarious; however, the fires exacerbated their already difficult situation. Latino farmworkers faced multiple barriers in the evacuation phase, were unable to access appropriate relief services and today continue to be impacted with limited or no relief in sight.

Several other reports about the fires raised concerns about farmworkers' experiences during the initial week of the firestorms. According to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), farmworkers in North San Diego County received disparate treatment or no services at all. AFSC argues that some of these irregularities amount to serious civil and human rights violations needing additional investigation to assess the treatment of vulnerable populations by government agencies. Specifically, the presence of the Border Patrol near evacuation sites in Fallbrook, Valley Center, and other communities created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation for farmworkers which prevented many families from evacuating to safety zones. Secondly, several accounts indicate farmworkers labored in fields during the fires exposed to dangerous air contaminants because employers failed to disseminate adequate information for employees regarding evacuation procedures and/or did not allow some employees to evacuate. Furthermore, AFSC notes there was a general lack of informational resources describing relief assistance for farmworkers concluding that "despite the continuous need of basic food and water, these communities were not serviced by any formal/government relief efforts."<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Immigrant Rights Consortium, Justice Overcoming Boundaries, and other legal organizations are investigating the treatment of farmworkers and other vulnerable populations during the evacuation process. According to the ACLU, many farmworkers worked in mandatory evaluation areas and were exposed to "reckless endangerment." One worker reported that "immigrant crews kept working while wind whipped smoke and ash in their eyes."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>American Friends Service Committee. *Preliminary Report: The State of Civil and Human Rights for Migrant Communities in San Diego County during the Firestorms of October 2007*. San Diego: American Friends Service Committee San Diego Area Office, 2007.

[http://www.aclusandiego.org/article\\_downloads/000325/AFSC-Preliminary-Report-SD-Fires-FINAL.pdf](http://www.aclusandiego.org/article_downloads/000325/AFSC-Preliminary-Report-SD-Fires-FINAL.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> American Civil Liberties Union, Justice Overcoming Boundaries, and San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium. *Firestorm: Treatment of Vulnerable Populations during the San Diego Fires, 2007*.

[http://www.aclusandiego.org/article\\_downloads/000325/Final%20Report%20-%20Firestorms%2011-07.pdf](http://www.aclusandiego.org/article_downloads/000325/Final%20Report%20-%20Firestorms%2011-07.pdf)

## WILDFIRES OF 2007

Supplementing previously published reports, the NLRC report presented new survey and focus group data gathered regarding losses and needs of farmworkers resulting from the fires. Additionally, through focus groups and key informant interviews, the report explored questions of access to emergency relief, protection of civil and human rights and overall government response to protect farmworkers and their families from harm during the fires.

General research findings include:

- ❏ Farmworkers and migrants were disproportionately exposed to fire impacts with limited or no relief.
- ❏ Large numbers of farmworkers and migrants living in substandard housing conditions in rural communities lost housing during the fires and had no recourse for recovery.
- ❏ The relationship between farmworkers and migrants and emergency service providers is tenuous.
- ❏ The majority of emergency service providers lack the necessary cultural and linguistic competency to communicate appropriately with Latino, primarily Spanish-speaking and Mexican Indigenous farmworkers and migrants.
- ❏ Culturally and linguistically appropriate resources on health and safety during emergencies are limited or do not exist.
- ❏ Some farmworkers and migrants who were fearful of deportation during evacuation did not evacuate their homes in mandatory evacuation zones.
- ❏ Farmworkers and migrants did not receive appropriate evacuation notifications.
- ❏ Farmworkers and migrants were unaware of emergency relief services and procedures to solicit assistance.
- ❏ Farmworkers and migrants did not receive adequate information about emergency relief eligibility criteria.
- ❏ Resources for farmworkers who were ineligible to receive traditional sources of assistance were limited or non-existent.
- ❏ Economic effects of the fires are compounded by language, cultural and social barriers that limit access to support programs and services.
- ❏ Volunteers and/or staff at evacuation centers enforced eligibility criteria at whim and/or misinformed families seeking assistance.

## WILDFIRES OF 2007

A survey administered to over 700 individuals documented both short term and immediate needs of farmworkers and their families in the wake of the fires. According to the survey, the needs of greatest concern in farmworker and migrant communities in order of priority were employment, shelter & housing, food & water, personal hygiene products, health, educational & mental health services.

### Employment

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Lack or limited access to employment resulting from the fires is the top concern for farmworkers and migrants. While many families faced difficulty finding jobs since the freeze in January of 2007, the fires further damaged economic activities making work difficult to find. Overall well-being is dependent on their ability to secure employment.

**According to the survey, 99% of participants reported losing income and/or a job as a result of the fires.**

### Shelter and Housing

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Housing is a critical issue for farmworkers and migrants year-round. Due to high housing costs in North San Diego County compared to income farmworkers earn, they face serious challenges keeping up with housing costs. The fires worsened the housing crisis for farmworkers by making it less affordable and available. In some instances, farmworkers and migrants lost their housing during the fires.

**According to the survey, shelter and housing is in the top-three of the most urgent needs in the community.**

**Eight percent of survey participants lost their housing or shelter as a result of the fires.**

### Food and Water

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Access to food and water is an ongoing pressing issue for farmworkers and migrants in North San Diego County. Many farmworker families living in remote regions often have difficulty accessing grocery stores due to lack of transportation. Furthermore, they are unable to afford basic food staples due to limited income.

**Eighty-two percent of participants reported having lost food and water as a result of the fires.**

**According to the survey close to half of the participants reported having urgent and long-term needs for food and water.**

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## Non-Food Items

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Access to non-food items is an ongoing challenge for farmworkers.

**Personal hygiene products were the non food items most needed by participants.**

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## Health

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Access to health care both during and after an emergency is an ongoing pressing issue for farmworker and migrant families.

**Thirty-three percent of survey respondents reported not having access to medical care.**

**Over half (57%) of participants reported mental health issues (depression and stress) as a result of the fires.**

**Sixty-five percent of participants do not have any type of health insurance coverage for themselves and 23% have no insurance for their children.**

**Participants reported alarmingly high rates of asthma and/or lung disease in this community (22%).**

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## Educational and Emotional Well-Being

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The fires affected general emotional well-being of farmworkers and their families.

Limited or no mental health services have been provided to help farmworker families cope with aftermath of the fires.

**According to the survey, the top three pressing needs are: Employment/Income, food/water, and housing.**

## METHODOLOGY

The research team at the National Latino Research Center used a mixed methodology in collecting information for the development of this Emergency Preparedness Plan.

### **Literature Review**

A comprehensive review of literature related to emergencies and the fate of vulnerable communities was conducted over a four month period. Utilizing the *Firestorm Report* published by the NLRC as a base additional research was reviewed and summarized in the literature review section of this plan. Reviewing and analyzing three decades of research on disaster was the primary source of information in the development of strategies included in this plan.

### **Technical Assistance**

The research team worked with the American Red Cross in San Diego County and the Office of Emergency Services for the County of San Diego to gather information about how to best embark upon this process of creating an Emergency Plan for Farmworker Communities. These meetings also allowed the research team to build and strengthen partnerships with these two agencies that will ensure that the plan developed is relevant and useful during an emergency and that it will allow for the coalition to work in accordance to local emergency structures in San Diego County.

### **Working Group of the CARE Coalition**

A special working group of the Farmworker CARE Coalition was established to establish key areas of the plan as well as begin implementing the most urgent action items such as creation of the asset map, community curriculum and census of the farmworker community in San Diego County. The working group was critical in the development of the strategies proposed in this report.

### **Networking**

The research team was invited to participate in the Second Convening of the National Consensus Panel on Emergency Preparedness and Cultural Diversity. At this meeting the team presented the results of research related to the experience of farmworkers during the fires as well as the coalition's work toward the creation of a preparedness plan.

The research team also presented the project at the Western Migrant Stream Forum in January of 2009 where it was warmly received. Several other agencies seeking to replicate a plan such as this one approached the team for further information and to explore further collaboration. Additionally, the NLRC has been invited to participate in blue ribbon panel, to be convened on March 6, 2009 in Sarasota, Florida by The W. Montague Cobb/National Medical Association's Health Institute, whose charge is to create cultural competency standards for state and local disaster plans.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this literature review is to investigate disaster preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery, focusing on the plan, policy, and experiences of vulnerable populations. Results from the literature review, combined with the lessons learned and results of our research during the fires of 2007, have informed our strategic plan for emergency preparedness for farmworker communities in San Diego County.

Decades of disaster literature are a testament of the neglected needs of vulnerable populations. As a result of this disregard, entire populations were without urgent information, without medical services, not evacuated in urgent situations, rejected or without access to shelters, and ignored in the distribution of aid (Sanches & Hanrahan, 2008). Following Hurricane Katrina, reports have noted the exigency of incorporating the unique needs of vulnerable populations at every level of disaster preparedness for successful mitigation (e.g., Sanches & Hanrahan, 2008; Muniz, 2006). The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) incompetence—during Hurricane Katrina, the October 2007 Southern California Wildfires, and several past disasters—in providing fundamental relief provisions such as food, water, shelter, evacuation brought about fatal and cataclysmic results; which is why it is imperative to review the process in which the United States and the state of California provide for vulnerable populations.

For the purpose of this review, the definition 'vulnerable populations' is applied to understand the impact of disasters on North County, San Diego farmworkers, who are characterized as being of limited English proficiency (LEP), culturally, socially, and geographically isolated, low-income (medium reported total income is between \$7,500 and \$9,999) ethnic minority (many identify themselves as Latino/Hispanic) and struggle with varying immigration statuses (Nuñez-Alvarez et al., 2008). When defining a population as "vulnerable," Sullivan and Hakkinen note the complexity of restricted abilities, which "can occur alone or in combination, compounding the difficulty associated in executing preparedness scenarios (2006: 3). Vulnerable populations typically refer to a larger group and can expand the number of at-risk people to include the very young, the elderly, immigrants, refugees, and others who may be physically, linguistically, socially, or economically at a disadvantage when it comes to receiving or acting upon preparedness or warning information" (Sullivan & Hakkinen 2006: 3).

Addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of Latino communities is of particular import, given the geographic location and social demographic of the state of California. More than 13,000,000 Californians are of Hispanic/Latino descent; making nearly 1 out of every 4 Californians of Hispanic/Latino origin. An estimated 27% of the Californian population is foreign born (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Public Policy Institute of California estimates that as of 2006, 2.8 million undocumented immigrants live in California (2008). Nationwide, the Latino population will increase, expanding into states without established communities (Benitez and Rodriguez, 2008: 1). Further, over the past 18 years the number of FEMA-declared disasters in the United States have more than doubled; from 38 declarations in 1990 to 75 in 2008 (FEMA, 2008). California has the second highest number of disaster declarations (74) after Texas (83). In 2008 alone California had 16 FEMA declared disasters (FEMA, 2008). Considering California's status as a disaster-prone state and nearly a quarter of its population identified as Latino the needs of this demographic must be taken into account.

In this literature review we ask; with the rising population rates of Latinos in California and more than three decades of disaster documentation directly citing the disproportionate and negative effects felt by ethnic groups, why do emergency and disaster related policies continue to fail? On behalf of the general public's

safety during an epidemic or biological disaster, a safe environment must be created, where immigrants feel that seeking assistance of authorities and first responders is in their best interest. Muniz of the National Council of La Raza, warns that “if the government and private relief agencies fail to convince a segment of the nation’s largest minority that they are not a safe source of preventative care and treatment of credible information, they have effectively undermined their ability to keep the country safe and healthy” (2006:2).

In order to understand the gaps, barriers, and aftermath of disasters on diverse communities, their experiences during catastrophic events must be explored. Although there are several disasters to explore, for the purpose of this review we focus primarily on Katrina in New Orleans and catastrophic natural disasters in California. Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans was a sobering account of what occurs when entire populations of impoverished minorities are left out of the disaster preparedness and mitigation planning process. This harrowing experience is found time and again with the occurrence of every disaster. The cataclysmic effect of New Orleans’ ethnic population, the incompetency of governmental disaster planning, and the public’s reaction of outrage has pushed diversity-inclusive disaster planning and mitigation to the forefront of policy implementation (Pastor, Bullard, Boyce, Fothergill, Morello-Frosch, & Wright, 2006). Given that California represents a state with diverse social demographics and a history of natural disasters, the 2007 wildfires in California and the effect on the farmworker community provide a recent and candid source of information in need of investigation. Further, report in 2004 by RAND categorized California as amongst the best-prepared states. Yet, countless literature reviews and reports continue to expose vastly different experiences for California’s vulnerable populations prior to, during, and after disasters (Fothergill et al., 1999; Andrulis et al., 2007; Alvarez-Nunez & Martinez et al., 2008; Mathew & Kelly, 2008). Therefore by focusing on the experience of California’s populations and its status as a ‘prepared state’- a better perspective can be gained as to what it means to be a member of a vulnerable community during a disaster.

### **Cultural and Linguistic Competency in Preparedness**

Andrulis et al. identifies ‘Emergency Preparedness’ as a “community’s readiness to react constructively to natural as well as human-made threats to minimize harm to public health” (2007b: 1270). The nationwide growth of the Latinos, particularly in the south and southeast regions of the U.S., requires the recognition of the needs of this population by acknowledging the “ethnic, cultural, and economic makeup of a given region in order to assess the needs and challenges of those in a potential disaster area” (Muniz 2006: 2). Currently, in the San Diego region, Latinos (predominantly of Mexican origin) represent 26.7% of the total population (US Census 2000). Regardless of this significant demographic, emergency workers in California lack the skills to accommodate the farmworker community. Cultural and linguistic competency is a crucial component to effectuate the preparedness of a community and the health of the general public. Fothergill (et al., 1999) found that poor translations of emergency information, evacuation mandates, and aid information left many community members uninformed. Nuñez-Alvarez and colleagues found that during the 2007 firestorm “Emergency service providers lack the necessary cultural and linguistic competency to communicate appropriately with Latinos, primarily Spanish-speaking and Mexican indigenous farmworkers and migrants” (2008: 11). Similarly, Aguirre (1988) studied how Texas’ tornado warnings fell short of aiding its population and deduced that the US’ disaster plan “presupposes either a common shared language [or] culture of the adaptation of the warning system to a multilingual and multicultural social structure” (from Fothergill et al., 1999:160). Rogers (1992) found parallel risk communication issues with United States emergency authorities and a Hawaiian group. Although a common language was being used (i.e., English) the cultural differences and insensitivities were too great—therefore, the mitigation efforts were ineffective. Cultural differences resulted in an impression of dissatisfaction, mistrust, and disdain.

Furthermore the community members related this experience as furthering the ill treatment and oppression of their group (Rogers 1992). Risk communication goes beyond the capability to facilitate a message to a group during an emergency; it starts with the dissemination of risk education materials to enable and prepare the community in need.

In order to enable disaster preparedness behavior in a community, education must be linguistically and culturally tailored to fit the population it is targeting. To borrow from James, Hawkins, Rowel, “risk communication messages to a targeted audience; the message, the format, and the dissemination strategies used must meet the needs and behaviors of the targeted audience” (2007: 2-3). A study published by Ganz, Rimer, and Lewis (2002) utilized the social marketing theory to research the barriers, needs, and characteristics of different ethnic groups; the study revealed the importance of appropriate language and culturally appropriate translations. Perry and Lindell (1991) performed a study that disclosed great behavioral variation among ethnic minority communities’ use of emergency communication, Latino groups depended on informal social networks such as family members and neighbors, to disseminate disaster warning information. The groups made more connections with informal sources such as family members and neighbors. Fothergill (et al, 1999) found that Latinos depended on informal groups, friends and relatives, for disaster information. Studies performed in 1986 (Perry and Mushkatel), 1991 (Perry and Nelson), 1992 (Phillips and Ephraim), and 1997 (Gladwin and Peacock) all support the notion that Latinos tend to have strong cohesive family and community relations which allow and require relief services to capitalize on this vital communication network.

Communication reliability studies report that all individuals, regardless of ethnicity, consider disaster warnings from emergency authorities (first responders, firefighters, etc) to be credible. Also, studies continue to show that disaster communication from the mass media is an important source of information for Latinos (Subervi-Velez, Denny, Ozuna, Quintero & Palerm, 1992). Mexican-Americans tend to consider the media to be a dependable source of information (Fothergill, 1999). Gladwin and Peacock (1997) reported that more than 14% of their study participants depend solely on Spanish-language television and 32% utilize Spanish radio broadcasting. Communication data regarding the cultural behavior of Latinos, mass media usage and informal communication behaviors, is a vital source of information for policy makers to engage this community in disaster planning and mitigation.

## **Preparedness**

Preparedness behavior involves emergency planning, “stocking emergency supplies, mapping evacuation paths, response training, practice drills, and disaster educational efforts” on the federal, state, local and individual level (Fothergill et al., 1999:158). Individual preparation effort levels tend to vary between the different ethnic groups. Latinos are less likely than whites to have preparation and education facilitated to family members yet are more likely to aid evacuate, house, and help their family members in comparison to other ethnic groups (Fothergill et al., 1999). However, Morrow found that Latino and African American family members were more likely to assist relatives in the preparation process prior to a disaster (Morrow, 1997). Further, income and ethnicity is a determinant of preparedness behavior; a 1980 study performed by Turner et al., found that, within their data sample, Anglos had higher socioeconomic (income, occupation, education) levels in relation to Latinos and African Americans, which enabled high-income Anglos to invest in earthquake insurance and make masonry-strengthening changes to their houses, adjustments that all other ethnic groups in the study were unable to make as a result of cost.



The impact of disparate income levels and available resources is as consequential to the overall community as they are to the individual community members. Zakour and Harell (2003) use exchange theory to explain disaster relief distribution to low-income populations and to the network of disaster organizations. The theory of exchange is based off the number of valuable resources provided by an organization. The *actor* with the greatest number of resources to *exchange* will be more important and more engaged with other organizations involved in the disaster-relief network of organizations. Organizations who provide service to ethnic minorities are less connected to the web of service organizations due to the lack of resources (Zakour & Harrell, 2003). A web of service organizations with numerous connections to one another will have an efficient and synergized response (Iprovided that each facility comprehends their purpose and the purpose of other facilities). This synergy provides expedient communication, increasing the efficacy of disaster response. As noted, low-income and marginalized communities have less accommodating organizations and tend to lack an established “web” or “network” of resource-rich organizations. The organizations that tend to aid low-income populations are peripheral (minimal network connections) or isolated (no network connections) (Zakour & Harrell, 2003: 32). As a result of this apparent disconnect from the network, ethnic neighborhoods “suffer from a relative lack of services needed for rapid response and recovery from disasters” (Zakour & Harrell, 2003: 33). Minimal relief service is better than no relief service; however, it is important that the greater relief network builds a relationship with limited relief organizations, providing them with educational trainings and surplus resources (Zakour & Harrell, 2003).

### **Dissemination of Preparedness Education**

Mathew and Kelly define preparedness education of disasters “as printed material produced to educate the public, in-person trainings, or workshops held by disaster preparedness educators for the public, and educational campaigns produced for the media such as television, radio, print and the Internet”(2008: 12). Researchers from Drexel University performed a study in 2007 on “preparing racially and ethnically diverse communities for public health emergencies,” and found that over the past three decades, ethnically diverse communities were accommodated into printed materials and training programs for disaster planning only 10% of the time” (Andrulis, 2007). Since 1989 (Loma Prieta) case studies have revealed “shortages of written and audio-visual materials, as well as multi-cultural programs for emergency mitigation, preparedness, and recovery” (Subervi-Velez et al., 1992:2). Though there is interest and awareness of the for bilingual messages, few organizations have adequate staff (Subervi-Velez et al., 1992). Two decades later, we are dealing with the same educational disparities in preparing ethnic groups for disasters. Prior to Hurricane Andrew, funds had been designated to the provision of disaster education, yet the product was only in English. Findings by Mejer (1994) illustrate differences of the manner in which communities create a ‘culture of safety’ through preparedness education. However, ethnic communities are less likely to have had adequate preparedness information for earthquakes (Faupel et al., 1992). Ethnic communities remain marginal in the dissemination of emergency procedures.

Efforts to lessen the discrepancies of disaster information to diverse communities do exist. For example, after the Northridge Earthquake in 1994, a Southern California County developed a web of nonprofits, faith-based, and government departments to disseminate disaster education materials and provide education services to the public (Mathew and Kelly, 2008:11). Nonetheless, regardless of such efforts, during the California wildfires of 2007, Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al. found that “culturally and linguistically appropriate resources on health and safety during emergencies are limited or do not exist” (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 57). Entire communities were left out of the planning and distribution of information in California. Advocates and aid workers involved with the farmworker population of North

county San Diego found many discrepancies and a lack of linguistically adequate information regarding general disaster information, evacuation mandates and aid (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 57).

### **Warning Communication and Response**

Response and Action to emergency warning communication requires familiarity of the level of risk, and knowledge of the method in which it is communicated. The National Council of La Raza published a report by Muniz, which found that the transmission of weather change data is the responsibility of local weather forecasting companies and their inclination and capability to use available minority media services. The lack of adequate, translatable information to these populations proved fateful in New Orleans. Furthermore, Latinos reported that after the Whittier Narrows earthquake, the English language broadcasting stations provided more pertinent information while Spanish-language station focused on emotional, interactive, and sensationalized stories; as a result culturally and ethnically diverse communities receive inadequate warning in times of crisis (Fothergill et al., 1999: 163). During the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, researchers found that the majority of Spanish-language media services were unable to function following the seismic shock. As a result of losing this vital link to LEP populations, service organizations were unable to alert the Spanish-speaking populations during the critical early hours of the emergency (Subervi-Velez et al., 1992:2). The study found that during the Loma Prieta earthquake, ethnic language radio stations did not have an alternate power source to continue functioning (Subervi-Velez et al., 1992: 2). Presumably, if ethnic media is the only connection to LEP populations, of which stations could be damaged beyond the ability to function, the connection is neither adequate nor dependable. Alternative means of communication must be established to have a reliable connection with LEP populations.

A literature review produced by Drexel University researchers found that ethnic minorities—in comparison to the larger population—had lower disaster-education, had lower risk discernment, had higher skepticism of disaster communication (warnings), and had a lower rate of evacuation-response; which translated to a higher reliance on relatives and media for disaster instruction. (Andrulis, 2007). Messias and Lacy found significant data after Katrina enforcing the sentiment from Latinos who both stayed and evacuated, they felt unprepared for the impact of the storm and were in need of basic provisions (2007:461). Furthermore, in 2007 during the wildfires many reports “indicate farmworkers labored in fields during the fires, exposed to dangerous air contaminants and failed to transmit critical evacuation information” (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 15-16). In one case almost 80 foreign immigrants (from Jamaica, Peru, and Brazil) were stranded, without access to transportation, in an apartment building by their employers. Media services mandated evacuation without translating “advisories” into Spanish or Portuguese (Muniz, 2006: 5). Advocates and aid workers involved with the farmworker population of North County, San Diego found many discrepancies and a lack of linguistically adequate information regarding general disaster information, evacuation mandates, and aid (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez, et al., 2008). Mexican families “depend on kinship ties in the disaster; more involvement and dependence on family for warning information and evacuation” (Fothergill et al., 1999:159). Lindell et al, 1980 found that “Mexican-Americans are less likely to evacuate even if trust in the warnings was equal” (from Fothergill et al., 1999: 159). However, while there are some ethnic variations related to evacuation, “overall ethnicity had a nonsignificant statistical effect on warning compliance” (Fothergill et al., 1999: 160). Regardless of behavioral differences among the ethnic groups: translation of disaster mandates was not prioritized as a necessary means to protect the public.

The study performed by Messias and Lacy disclosed that “language, lack of information, lack of transportation, and poverty were significant barriers to evacuation among Latino residents” (2007:461).

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has proclaimed that inadequate evacuation and relief efforts surrounding the California fires of 2007 surmount to severe “civil and human rights violations” requiring examination to determine the behavior toward at-risk communities by government agencies. The use of border patrol “near evacuation sites in Fallbrook, Valley Center, and other areas created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation” (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez & Martinez et al., 2008: 14). As a result of this intimidation, several farmworker families ignored evacuation mandates for fear of deportation. Others were ill-informed or uninformed of mandatory evacuation areas and did not receive emergency evacuation information (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 11). Many rumors were circulating regarding the presence of border patrol. Key informant interviews from the aids and advocates of farmworker populations “confirmed cases of harassment by local officials during relief efforts” (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al, 2008: 59). Geographic isolation, language barriers, immigration status and distrust greatly impaired the evacuation response and safety of ethnic communities.

### **Social Ecological Theory**

Although disasters are indiscriminate to the ethnicity, social class, immigration status, language, or culture of their victims, their impact tends to be greater in ethnically diverse communities. Zakour and Harrell use the *Social Ecological Model*, a framework to evaluate social determinants (ethnicity and income) as related to an environment (disaster preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery) to fully explore the disproportionate impact felt by low-income communities at every stage of a disaster (2003:40). The high concentration of people from low-income populations in areas with deteriorating building infrastructures mirrors historic discriminatory patterns; faulty masonry escalates physical structural damage and segregation of ethnic minorities diminishes the flow of disaster relief. Such communities often reside beyond the several-mile radius service reach of relief organizations. Relief organizations that serve these vulnerable populations are smaller, less stratified, less organized, have fewer workers, fewer mental health and aid services, have fewer amenities to give, and lack capacity to publicize the services they are able to provide (Zakour and Harrell, 2003: 33). The lack of resources and its effect on the populations is compounded by a lack of updated best-practiced methods, preparedness education, and effective emergency response and mitigation these localities (Zakour and Harrell, 2003: 40). A community’s capability to prepare and educate its members is directly correlated to its resiliency after the disaster.

### **Return to Normalcy: Mentally and Materially**

Racial and ethnic minority populations deal with greater vulnerability every stage of a disaster, including the return to normalcy. Disaster scholars have posited the mediating components of this occurrence; Andrulis, Siddiqui, and Ganter determined that “they include socioeconomic barriers, lower perceived personal risk from emergencies, distrust of warning messengers, lack of preparation and proactive action, and reliance on informal sources of information”(2007b:1270 (7)). Zakour and Harrell further explain the social inequities apparent during disasters; the minute number of relief-service agencies within a serviceable distance, the lack of disaster-network connections, the limited resources and staff capacity of the organization and “geographic barriers slowing redistribution of resources during a disaster” (Zakour and Harrell, 2003: 47). Extensive material destruction occurs as a result of faulty masonry and weak infrastructure in the low-income residence of at-risk residents (Zakour and Harrell, 2003: 47). Low-income communities are less likely to be rebuilt, affecting the members’ psychological health and ultimately slowing the return to normalcy (Fothergill et al., 1999).

Fothergill et al., (1999) found that beyond higher death rates and greater material destruction, ethnic communities deal with higher rates of psychological trauma—which often arises from cultural incompetency amongst relief workers and the loss of power to help oneself or one’s community after a disaster. A 1980s study performed by Turner et al. (1980) reported different fatalistic responses to earthquakes among ethnic groups. African Americans dealt with the greatest fatalistic emotional response: “that there was little or nothing one could do to protect against them; Mexican-Americans and Whites were about equal in their fatalistic feelings” (Fothergill et al., 1999:15). Farmworkers, though typically of Latino (specifically Mexican) origin are involved in a altered community with less resources than all other groups, including other Latinos, and therefore may deal with enormous fatalistic notions, as noted by NLRC Firestorm 2007 report (Nuñez-Alvarez- & Martinez et al., 2008).

### **Aftermath: Provision of Aid**

Economic aftermath and the issues therein are exacerbated by aid-limiting factors such as “language, cultural, and social barriers” which restricted aid resources for farmworkers (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 12). Media coverage is focused on wealthier areas, which provides aid to these individuals first, (Fothergill et al., 1999) which was found to happen during the October 2007 fires as well, where those sheltered in Qualcomm stadium had an abundance of relief items and services; whereas the at-risk farmerworker community- whose differences in immigration statuses made them fearful or unable to stay in Federally run shelters- were in need of basic necessity items such as food and water (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 15). Disparities can be seen at all levels, after the Loma Prieta earthquake, emergency shelters in upper income neighborhoods had better relief services (“more volunteers than homeless”, visits from the mayor) while the shelters in poor neighborhoods reported that white relief workers made “racist remarks and the mayor paid no visits” (Fothergill et al, 1999: 163). Similar issues arose during the California 2007 fires, the NLRC found that “volunteers and staff at evacuation centers enforced eligibility criteria at whim and/or misinformed families seeking assistance” (Nuñez-Alvarez et al., 2008: 12). Firestorm 2007 report found that “the relationship between farmworkers and emergency service providers is tense. First responders lack the cultural tools to properly interact with farmworkers (Nuñez-Alvarez et al., 2008: 11). Fothergill (et al., 1999) found reports of tension in multi-ethnic shelters, displaying an “us-them” relationship, which caused further detriment to the mental health of the ethnic evacuees. 57% of farmworker community member respondents reported struggling with depression and stress (psychological trauma) after the fires (Nuñez-Alvarez et al., 2008: 14). James et al., found that ethnic minorities are at a higher risk from disasters due to “language, housing patterns, building construction, community isolation and cultural insensitivities” (2007:1).

The hope is that in any disaster, evacuating victims, preserving life, and the wider population’s health takes precedence over documentation status. Unfortunately in the aftermath of Katrina, the press disclosed countless investigations where FEMA failed to “provide emergency housing or shelter to Latinos it mistakenly presumed were undocumented, which raises serious concerns on civil rights and humanitarian grounds, especially since FEMA’s eligibility rules do not preclude undocumented immigrants from accessing emergency shelter services” (Muniz 2006:4-5). Those who were rejected at FEMA shelters after Katrina due to immigration status “could have sought shelter through private agencies, primarily American Red Cross. Furthermore, agencies such as the American Red Cross did not always receive immigrants well at their shelters, leaving many immigrant families to fend for themselves” (Muniz, 2006:4-5). Messias & Lacy (2007:445) found that there were many reports after Katrina that disclosed the “eviction and threatened deportation” from Red Cross emergency shelters—a private relief organization which maintains that citizenship and nationality documents are not requisite for victims to receive shelter and food. Even so,

in many cases the Latinos were documented and as a result of this hostile environment avoided needed relief and shelter service centers (Muniz, 2006). Such issues were apparent during the October 2007 California wildfires, the NLRC found that the presence of border patrol and uniformed officers in evacuation shelters spread fear among farmworker families, leaving them with no or little recourse (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2007: 59). Immigration status further compounds the vulnerability of disaster victims.

The farmworker community is further victimized by its lack of financial capital and varying immigration statuses of its members. Fothergill (et al., 1999) reported that less aid is dispersed amongst ethnic-minority groups. Various established issues explain this: elementary education completion, capability to fill out complex forms and limited access to legal aid workers. Educational attainment amongst farmworkers varies between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade in Vista, California (Nuñez-Alvarez & Alvarez et al., 2008). FEMA regulations provide undocumented immigrants have minimal emergency relief resources, of which, are “short-term, non-cash assistance, and private assistance such as food, water, medical care, shelter, and clothing” (Muniz, 2006:4). The NLRC reported that 33% of participants disclosed a lack of accessible medical services and 96% of farmworkers in Vista, California reported having no health insurance, putting the community members in dire health straits (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008). Nonetheless even the most basic and fundamental needs, such as food and water were neglected by relief agencies during the 2007 California fires, the NLRC found that nearly half of the survey “participants reported having urgent needs for food and water” (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 13).

As with shelter accommodation, aid dispersion was complicated by FEMA’s assumptions regarding immigration status—prohibiting many eligible individuals from receiving aid. The 2000 census disclosed that 77% of children in undocumented families are U.S. citizens. These families are often “unaware of their ability to apply for FEMA- administered benefits on behalf of their U.S. children and other eligible family members, which may explain, in part, the limited interface between Latinos and FEMA and the reportedly small pool of Latino applicants (450 applicants in Houston) (Muniz, 2006: 4). During the 2007 wildfire in California, the NLRC reported that farmworkers and migrants did not receive adequate information about emergency relief eligibility criteria (Nuñez-Alvarez et al. 2008: 40). Undocumented parents who attempted to get disaster relief for their native-born, U.S. citizen children were in fear of risking deportation (Hurricane Katrina Assessment Team Report, 2005). However, recent immigrants are prohibited from accessing benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Medicaid for five years. Even after catastrophic events these restrictions are not waived for the children affected (Muniz, 2007). Even the most basic needs were not accounted for by FEMA during California’s 2007 fires, the NLRC found that farmworkers and migrants exposed to fire had “limited or no relief.” After Katrina, bilingual (Spanish and English) advisories urged anyone in need of disaster relief service to get help from all relief organizations, yet undocumented hurricane victims who approached emergency shelters in Texas were required to go before a judge in deportation hearings (Terhune, 2005).

Legal immigrant status defined as “qualified aliens” are provided with cash and housing assistance as well as social security benefits, and unemployment insurance. These services are open to individuals who are legal permanent residents (LPRs) but exclude all others temporarily and legally residing in the United States. Messias and Lacy discovered that “contrary to precedents (e.g. Hurricane Andrew and Sept.11, 2001), the federal government decided not to waive federal guidelines regarding immigration status,” which included individuals with work visas who were not accommodated for in federal disaster policy. Individuals whose statuses were still in the process of being completed, and those without any papers but in dire need of basic assistance had no recourse for basic aid (Muniz 2007).

The needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers vary. After a disaster, seasonal farmworkers are in need of long-term aid—assistance that most disaster assistance programs do not provide—as result of living year-round off one season’s wages (Shepard, 2008: 1). Researchers at the NLRC found that “traditional sources of assistance” to be minimal or entirely lacking for farmworkers who were ineligible to receive aid (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al. 2008). Housing lost to the fires left the farmworkers with “no recourse for recovery” (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez, 2008: 11). Various reports during the Katrina aftermath disclosed FEMA’s detrimental assumptions that various communities of Latino residents did not have required immigration status, and as a result, would be unable to receive housing assistance (Muniz, 2006). Due to wrongful assumptions, these individuals were not accounted for. FEMA acknowledged its actions by claiming that “part of the problem with the Hispanic community is that if you are illegal, you cannot apply for housing,” further examination revealed that many of the residents were documented immigrants (Simmons, 2005).

Ineffective communication to Latinos and other vulnerable populations is merely a small fragment of larger issue, resulting in grave detriment during times of crisis. The October 2007 fire victims surveyed by the NLRC found that only 40% of the participants “were aware of various assistance providers in the area” specifically 14% aware of community shelters, 4% aware of church support, 32% aware of free food and water, 14% aware of federal aid such as food stamps, etc., 12% aware of FEMA and Red Cross assistance (Nuñez-Alvarez et al. 2007: 40). Beyond evacuation notifications, “farmworkers and migrants were unaware of emergency relief services and procedures to solicit assistance” (Nuñez-Alvarez et al, 2008: 40). The farmworker population, which deals with an array of barriers, from a variety of languages to a variety of immigration statuses, was not accounted for in the implementation and mobilization of a disaster plan. The Firestorm report by the National Latino Research Center found that

Hurricane Andrew exposed the substandard relief efforts to LEP populations: primary relief information was printed in English only, preventing Latino and Haitian individuals from basic emergency relief such as food medicine, and assistance information (Yelvington, 1997). 2005 census data reports that nearly 30% of New Orleans “Spanish-speaking demographic spoke English “less than every well.” Therefore translated disaster information is crucial to facilitate an effective evacuation, response, and relief (Messias and Lacy, 2007: 444). Nuñez-Alvarez, et al., (2008: 40) found that “culturally and linguistically appropriate resources on health and safety during emergencies are limited or do not exist.” Translations that would have provided communities with vital resources, ultimately aiding in the farmworker community in its return to normalcy, were never provided.

### **Recommendations from experts**

Scholars, sociologists, and policy analysts have provided applicable recommendations to better disaster response and relief services to the *entire* population, inclusive of diverse communities. Disaster-mitigating behavior begins with educational outreach from community, local, state, and federal organizations. The information disseminated must reflect the culture and language of the community served. These plans must “take into consideration Latinos’ perceived needs as well as their community resources, assets, and networks” (Messias and Lacy, 2007: 461). It is counterproductive for disaster education to cite resources that are unavailable to the group such as fire extinguishers, Red Cross first aid kits, transportation, and/or monetary savings.

English is the predominant language of preparedness information and disaster relief forms. Therefore in order to better serve the *entire* population, language requirements must be implemented into federal policy,

mandating that states, communities, and localities are providing imperative disaster information for their changing cultural and linguistic demographics (Muniz, 2006; Nuñez-Alvarez, 2008; Andrulis, 2007; Mathew and Kelly, 2008; James et al., 2007). Mathew & Kelly found that “at all levels, government and private agencies need to better coordinate English translations of vital documents, mobilize interpreters in communities that need them, and consider cultural and linguistic needs when creating emergency preparedness plans in order to ‘respond effectively to the next disaster or public health threat’” (2008:11). Furthermore, the education and literacy level of the community should be reflected in the Flesch-Kincaid grade scale rating for all disaster preparedness education, relief forms, and emergency communication information (James et al., 2007). The provision of health, home, and disaster information combined with preventative funds would reduce excessive use of federal disaster aid and could provide do-it-yourself information on economical masonry-strengthening adjustments and landscaping choices.

In order for effective disaster mitigation, policy must be established that provides adequate disaster education, where communities in need can interpret and understand the emergency communication (linguistically, culturally, and informed) and stimulate a response from the community members, moving them to action. A reliable, dependable, and trusted agency must take part in the translation and dissemination of emergency instructions. Capitalizing on the cohesiveness of the community and the cultural value of children provides disaster educators with avenues to engage vital ethnic groups’ interest and response to disasters (James et al., 2007). In most linguistically diverse situations, for the call to action to elicit a response, it would require governments to implement translators to aid with every stage of disaster response. Providing a culturally and linguistically familiar environment would minimize the heightened trauma experienced by diverse groups, which would facilitate the return to normalcy. Once normalcy is created, it is important to subsidize these areas so that sudden rent peaks do not detach constructed and stable neighborhoods (Fothergill, et al. 1999).

Beyond language, cultural sensitivity is vital to the treatment (perceived respect and shown respect) of the diverse group. Messiah and Lacy recommend for human service providers such as Medicaid and WIC “have automatic provision for inter-state evacuees to facilitate access to all levels of care” (2007:461). The NLRC advises the development of a stable policy to limit the corrupt measures of aid dispersion and racial issues (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008: 12). Community liaisons continue to be an applicable recommendation for effective disaster mitigation and relief dispersion (Fothergill, 1999; Andrulis, 2007; Mathew & Kelly, 2008; James et al, 2007). Fothergill (1999) found a lack of cohesive connections with community workers, activists, women, and community based organizations during the dissemination of disaster information. Utilizing these resources is an easy way of gaining cultural knowledge, providing culturally intelligent volunteers, and speeding the psychological and structural recovery of the population. Lastly and of utmost importance, considering the human rights violations of the past, the Tomas Rivera policy Institute recommends and concludes that “it should be made clear to first responders, the immigrant community, and the public in general that disaster relief is not conditional on immigration status” (Mathew & Kelly, 2006:29). The report found that of the first responders interviewed, all revealed that documentation and “immigration status is not a consideration when rendering disaster services, many among the immigrant community are still fearful that their status will come into question” (Mathew & Kelly, 2008:29). The 2008 enactment of AB 2327 in the state of California is a step closer to the protection of life over immigration status; however this progress must be made at every level of government for effective and comprehensive protection.

## Policy

In response to the barriers to accessing emergency relief and other health related services encountered by vulnerable communities during the wildfires of 2007 the California State legislature passed AB 2327 in 2008, which mandates a coordination of “all state agencies in connection with emergencies.” The bill requires that all “entities providing disaster-related services and assistance [should] strive to ensure that victims receive the assistance they need and are eligible to receive, and would require public employees to provide assistance without eliciting information or documents that are not strictly necessary to determine eligibility under state or federal law.” AB 2327 acknowledges, finds, and declares that evacuees and others fleeing disaster situations “commonly lose access to personal documents...replacing them during a disaster or emergency can be burdensome, if not impossible, especially for vulnerable populations.” AB 2327 is California’s first step in ensuring equal access to emergency related services for vulnerable communities like undocumented and farmworker communities.

Although federal, state, and local governments acknowledge the importance of incorporating at-risk, vulnerable populations into disaster plans, the policies and “plans on paper” continue to lack effective mechanisms for serving vulnerable populations (Levi, Vinter & Segal, 2007:6). The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) and the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan provide resources to gauge the progression and improvement of Federal disaster planning initiatives. The PAHPA has prioritized vulnerable populations into Federal and State plans, but does so without providing any applicable steps to succeed at doing this, an issue that is compounded by the fact that surveys show “that these groups have the least confidence in the government’s ability to respond to a disaster” (Levi, Vinter and Segal, 2007:6).

HSPD-21 a federal directive issued in October 2007, establishes a ‘National Strategy for Public Health and Medical Preparedness under the department of Homeland Security. The directive calls for an all-inclusive plan that accounts for the needs of at-risk populations, and acknowledges the requirement to engage the “private sector, academia, and other nongovernmental entities in preparedness and response efforts.” HSPD-21 recognizes the impossibility of preventing “all casualties in catastrophic events, but strategic improvements in our Federal State and local planning can prepare our nation to deliver appropriate care to the largest possible number of people, lessen the impact on limited health care resources, and support the continuity of society and government.” The directive cites the importance of “community resilience” and the provision of education and resources to “civic leaders, citizens, and families” to empower them with the capacity to respond and mitigate to disasters on an individual level. The directive raises the concern for how to serve such populations-yet no plans or policy has provided applicable steps on how to prepare, respond, and aid such populations.

The Federal Health and Human Services Department (DHHS) established the policy of ESF #8 through the Stafford Act to provide for the medical needs of the populations, directly citing the inclusion of “at-risk or special needs” populations that may have “medical or other functional needs medical and other functional needs before, during, and after an incident.” The State of California Emergency Plan of 2005 and the proposed State of California Emergency Plan Draft of 2008 (November 20) cites the California Department of Health and Human Services as the lead agency for the medical and public health needs, and during a Federal emergency would defer to the National Response Framework (NRF) and utilize ESF #8 for provision of Public Health and Medical Services. Despite this, during the October 2007 wildfires in California—a FEMA declared emergency—the “at-risk and vulnerable” farmworker population did not appropriate any services designated under ESF #8.



As previously mentioned the San Diego Firestorm 2007 Report prepared by the National Latino Research Center (NLRC) reported that specific to health care access; 33% of participants surveyed disclosed a lack of accessible medical services. (Nuñez-Alvarez, Martinez, Ramos, Gastelum, 2008: 11-14). Advocates and aid workers involved with the farmworker population of North County San Diego found many discrepancies and a lack of linguistically adequate information regarding general disaster information, evacuation mandates, and aid; including medical needs, which were not alleviated by ESF #8 (Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez, et al., 2008:57).

The State of California Emergency Plan proposed for 2008 specifically addresses the need to serve “at-risk individuals” within emergency response plans. The plan does not limit the definition of “at-risk individuals” and includes “those people whose needs are not fully addressed by the traditional service providers or feel they cannot comfortably or safely access and use the standard resources offered in preparedness, response, and recovery...those limited in their understanding of English, and those that are geographically or culturally isolated”(28). The proposed policy does not provide, with the exception of older adults and disabled individuals, applicable steps to ensure access to ethnically, geographically, culturally, and linguistically isolated populations. Lastly, California state policies call for the coordination of local jurisdictions, a review of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan San Diego County, California defined “at-risk” populations “as low-income, disabled and/or elderly and were based upon the 2000 census information” (4.40). While the local mitigation plan noted the population size, geographic characteristics (such as “land marks”), economic makeup, and academic offices of every participating jurisdiction, it failed to describe the social, ethnic, and cultural characteristics of the County demographics (1.3-1.11).

Three decades of research have continually—at the minimum—recommended enacting a language requirement for disaster education brochures, leaflets, and aid forms that should be culturally tailored to the minority population in need (Messias and Lacy, 2007; Mathew and Kelly, 2008; Fothergill, 1999). Although the State of California has made an effort to better serve its ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse populations during disasters, California lacks homogeneity of services across disaster departments: one public health department provides information in 9 different languages, whereas another could only provided information in English and b) tackles the “at-risk population” issues at only a superficial level (Lurie, 2004). Muniz of the National Council of La Raza, warns that “if the government and private relief agencies fail to convince a segment of the nation’s largest minority [Latinos] that they are not a safe source of preventative care and treatment of credible information, they have effectively undermined their ability to keep the country safe and healthy” (2006:2).

## **Conclusion**

Federal, State, and local governments have failed vulnerable populations at every level of disaster mitigation for decades. Experts continue to acknowledge the need to create multilingual and multicultural policies to aid individuals, however, minimal recommendations have been solidified in local, state, and federal plans. A few relevant recommendations made are: require a language minimum (demographically relevant) of disaster information, mandate immigration protection at all levels of government, and provide linguistically and culturally competent staff in relief organizations. By analyzing past disasters, specifically those in Southern California, we can develop simple and obvious adjustments to current disaster plans to minimize the significantly high number of deaths among minority communities.

Furthermore, results from tracking the behavioral patterns of specific minority populations prior to, during, and after a disaster show that Latinos are less likely to have disaster preparation kits, family plans, and disaster education. Latinos are more likely to depend on social networks to relay informal verification of disasters. Latinos are more likely to deal with higher levels of psychological trauma after the disaster, compounded by cultural insensitivity, language barriers, and socioeconomic marginalization in the dissemination of relief services. Such behavioral patterns should allow for policy makers, community organizers, and governmental agencies to effectively serve and reach the Latino demographic.

Muniz (2006) and Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez (et al., 2008) found that FEMA was unresponsive and unprepared for the Latino demographic, which resulted in a lack of access to aid during Katrina and Firestorm 2007 (Muniz, 2006; Nuñez-Alvarez & Martinez et al., 2008). Congress was unhelpful to the Latino population by failing to “enact legislative measures providing relief to legal immigrants whose status or eligibility for disaster relief services was compromised by Katrina” (Muniz 2006: 3). During both disasters, policy was not implemented to create a safety-conducive environment for families and individuals with varying immigration statuses. Despite the fact that California has taken first steps in addressing immigration inequities in access experienced by vulnerable communities during the wildfires of 2007 with AB 2327, there is still a great need for new comprehensive State policy in this arena.

California emergency policy did not accommodate the diversity of its population. Latinos were not accounted for in the preparation, response, evacuation, relief dispersion, and recovery. The National Latino Research Center, headed by Nuñez-Alvarez, found through surveys, focus groups, and interviews, that Latinos dealt with adverse conditions during and after the fires, conditions that could have been easily alleviated with the collaboration of government policy to put safety before immigration status and equal distribution of relief items to communities in need. As a result of many failed attempts at policy we need to look at the problem of disasters on a local, grass roots level. Academics have cited ‘community liaisons’ as the keystone to educating, preparing, evacuating, and serving culturally, linguistically, and geographically isolated populations. Yet, a study provided by Zakour and Harrell found that the majority of organizations that serve ethnic populations have limited resources and capabilities. Such organizations defined as “peripheral” with only a single connection to the disaster network; a connection that would severely impede any disaster service if disrupted. (Zakour and Harell, 2003: 41). Funds must be provided to enable the community in preparing itself and its member for the next disaster.

Failure to address disparities in access to health care for at-risk communities during emergencies in California has dire consequences. As stated by Andrulis in 2007, “the cost of inaction, as evidenced by the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina [and Firestorm 2007], offers a graphic portrait of what happens when the unique needs of communities are not part of the preparedness planning and execution.”

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN STRATEGIES

Based upon the experience of the coalition during the wildfires of 2007, the technical expertise provided to the research team, and the lessons learned from the literature review, we have established the following initial goals for the Emergency Preparedness plan for farmworkers in San Diego County.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan for the Farmworker CARE Coalition can be broken down into six main strategies:

- I. Community
- II. Partnerships
- III. Advocacy
- IV. Assets
- V. Capacity

### Strategy I-Community Involvement and Networking

Train and increase the capacity of the local farmworker community in areas emergency preparedness and relief.

- d. Create an Emergency Preparedness Curriculum to be delivered by trained community leaders. The curriculum will cover elements of family preparedness, resources available during disaster and civil rights during an emergency. To date the Poder Popular program have developed and begun to implement the preparedness curriculum in the community. The curriculum undergoes revisions as needed and the team is currently exploring ways to set up a registration program for community residents interested in receiving reverse 911 information related to evacuations.
- e. Create a comité or network of community liaisons dedicated to deliver information about evacuations and relief resources in the event of an emergency. These networks will reflect the structure of the community, including campsites, trailer parks, and remote and rural areas. These groups will be integrated into the ICS developed by the coalition. The Poder Popular program currently has working groups or comités in place throughout North County. These comités have specific topics they focus their work around. The creation of new comités related to disaster preparedness would build critical infrastructure in the community and allow for an organized grass roots response to emergencies. Individual members of these comités will be trained community level liaisons and will ensure trust and a sustainable source of information for community members. The comités and community liaisons will be incorporated into the Incident Command Structure discussed in Strategy V.
- f. Strengthen the linkages of comités/ networks to agencies on the coalition as well as with emergency and first responder agencies. Working to improve the relationship of the Poder Popular comités with coalition members is important to creating and sustaining long term ties.

COMMUNITY

## Strategy II-Partnerships

Build the membership of the coalition through involving more agencies and creating new partnerships.

### PARTNERSHIPS

- e. Build the membership of the coalition as a way to build our capacity in meeting the needs of the farmworker community during an emergency. After the fires of 2007 the membership of the coalition swelled to over 40 agencies. The coalition aims to increase participation by inviting these new agencies into the coalition on a permanent basis.
- b. Create and maintain partnerships between the Farmworker CARE Coalition and outside agencies. Partnerships of critical importance include; first responders such as police, fire, and medical services; Emergency relief agencies such as American Red Cross, Office of Emergency Services, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army; and media-Both Spanish and non Spanish Speaking. The goal of building partnerships is to establish communication with new agencies, update them on the coalition activities and emergency preparedness plan as well as educate them on the local farmworker community.
- c. Establish partnerships with local churches to create "safe havens" that will act as temporary evacuation points specifically for farmworkers in the event of an emergency.
- d. Work with ethnic media-radio, television, print-to build their capacity to serve the farmworker community during times of emergency.

## Strategy III-Advocacy

Create an advocacy plan for the coalition with the aim of increasing awareness among agencies and improve their capacity to design messages, materials and resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for farmworker communities. Involvement by the coalition in local, state and national related to provision of services to vulnerable community services is also of utmost importance.

### ADVOCACY

- c. Create an educational session about farmworkers in San Diego County that can be given to local partners in emergency services as well as relief agencies. The curriculum should cover demographics, community assets and the gaps in services that farmworkers experienced during the fires. The curriculum should also include instruction on how to build culturally and linguistically competent messages and informational materials for farmworkers and their families. Information regarding eligibility and civil rights afforded to undocumented immigrants should be included in the curriculum. Potential agencies that could benefit from this training include aid workers and agencies, first responders, the San Diego Farm Bureau and local political representatives.
- d. The Coalition will advocate at local, state and national levels for policy related to improving access to emergency preparedness information, resources and relief for vulnerable communities like farmworkers. Examples of important policies include language access during emergencies by limited English proficient persons and policy limiting the presence of uniformed officers.

## Strategy IV-Assets

The coalition will build its knowledge and of crucial assets that can be accessed in case of an emergency.

### A S S E T S

c. The coalition will develop and regularly update an asset matrix of agencies that can be resources in the event of an emergency. Potential assets include churches, ethnic media, food banks, fire stations, and relief agencies such as the American Red Cross and County Office of Emergency Services.

d. The coalition will build these assets into the ICS structure as described in Strategy V below. Assets will be critical to be able to be accessed by both the coalition and community residents who form part of the ICS.

## Strategy V-Capacity

The fifth strategy is that the Farmworker CARE Coalition will work to build its own capacity to respond to emergencies impacting farmworker families.

- d. First goal within this strategy is to create and maintain a database of the major neighborhoods, migrant camps and trailer parks where farmworkers live the will inform the Incident Command Structure (ICS-see below) of the coalition and ensure that information and resources are available in these areas both during and following an emergency.
- e. Research and Assess the capacity of health care systems such as clinics and hospitals to meet the health care needs of farmworkers during emergencies. This activity involves assessing both public and private health care systems and their emergency plans related to meeting the health care needs of farmworkers during emergencies. The plans will be compared to the capacity of the organizations in carrying out their work in times of emergency. Finally steps will be taken to encourage these health care agencies to improve where needed their capacity to meet health care needs for farmworkers during an emergency.
- f. The third and most cumbersome task involved in this strategy is to create and implement an Incident Command Structure following the federal NIMS disaster system for the coalition that will ensure a comprehensive, timely and organized response to any emergency. Activities include conducting initial trainings for coalition members also include training all members of the coalition and the community that commit to being part of this structure as well as do a series of “practice” exercises to work out this ICS.

### C A P A C I T Y

As a result from interviews and feedback received from emergency experts in order for our coalition to collaborate with emergency responders it is required that a Incident Command Structure be established that has clear and specified roles and protocols for participating agencies.

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a structured disaster system, developed to create a synergized response at the local, tribal, state, and federal levels. Agencies compliant with NIMS should be

able to operate with fluidity and efficiency with the greater NIMS network. The system is intended to provide a structured and flexible response to any type/size of natural or manmade public health emergencies. NIMS works hand-in-hand with the National Response Framework (NRF), which provides an overview on the roles and responsibilities at each level of government for the intended disaster response within the nation at large (FEMA, 2008). NIMS and NRF were re-structured and developed after 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina- to provide a more competent and best-practiced approach to how the Nation, as a whole, protects and aids its public in the case of a disaster.

The Incident Command Structure (ICS), “a standardized, on-scene, all-hazard incident management concept” developed during the 1970s California wildfires, provides structured hierarchy of roles, communication terminology and networks, and a common framework for coordinated multijurisdictional, tribal, state, and local response (FEMA, 2008). Through the establishment of roles, the command system delegates authority, accountability, and unity of command (FEMA, 2008). ICS has been incorporated into the NIMS structure to minimize miscommunication, manage resources, and provide a common structure for private and public agencies. The role of Federal Government is to support the State and local authorities with needed resources rather than to command the response (FEMA, 2008).

The National Incident Management System is a comprehensive plan across local, tribal, state, and Federal, as well as private and public agencies to “prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity, in order to reduce the loss of life and property and harm to the environment” (FEMA, 2008).

A basic NIMS structure looks like this chart with responsibilities listed below. The information below was developed by the Department of Labor-Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Figure 1 — Incident Command System Structure



The **Incident Commander** (IC) or the **Unified Command** (UC) is responsible for all aspects of the response, including developing incident objectives and managing all incident operations.

The IC is faced with many responsibilities when he/she arrives on scene. Unless specifically assigned to another member of the Command or General Staffs, these responsibilities remain with the IC. Some of the more complex responsibilities include:

- Establish immediate priorities especially the safety of responders, other emergency workers, bystanders, and people involved in the incident.
- Stabilize the incident by ensuring life safety and managing resources efficiently and cost effectively.
- Determine incident objectives and strategy to achieve the objectives.
- Establish and monitor incident organization.
- Approve the implementation of the written or oral Incident Action Plan.
- Ensure adequate health and safety measures are in place.

The **Command Staff** is responsible for public affairs, health and safety, and liaison activities within the incident command structure. The IC/UC remains responsible for these activities or may assign individuals to carry out these responsibilities and report directly to the IC/UC.

The **Information Officer's** role is to develop and release information about the incident to the news media, incident personnel, and other appropriate agencies and organizations.

The **Liaison Officer's** role is to serve as the point of contact for assisting and coordinating activities between the IC/UC and various agencies and groups. This may include Congressional personnel, local government officials, and criminal investigating organizations and investigators arriving on the scene.

The **Safety Officer's** role is to develop and recommend measures to the IC/UC for assuring personnel health and safety and to assess and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations. The Safety Officer also develops the Site Safety Plan, reviews the Incident Action Plan for safety implications, and provides timely, complete, specific, and accurate assessment of hazards and required controls.

The following is a list of Command Staff and General Staff responsibilities that either the IC or UC of any response should perform or assign to appropriate members of the Command or General Staffs:

- Provide response direction;
- Coordinate effective communication;
- Coordinate resources;
- Establish incident priorities;
- Develop mutually agreed-upon incident objectives and approve response strategies;
- Assign objectives to the response structure;
- Review and approve IAP's;
- Ensure integration of response organizations into the ICS/UC;
- Establish protocols;
- Ensure worker and public health and safety; and
- Inform the media.
- 

The **General Staff** includes Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administrative responsibilities. These responsibilities remain with the IC until they are assigned to another individual. When the

Operations, Planning, Logistics or Finance/Administrative responsibilities are established as separate functions under the IC, they are managed by a section chief and can be supported by other functional units.

The **Operations** Staff is responsible for all operations directly applicable to the primary mission of the response.

The **Planning** Staff is responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating the tactical information related to the incident, and for preparing and documenting Incident Action Plans (IAP's).

The **Logistics** Staff is responsible for providing facilities, services, and materials for the incident response.

The **Finance and Administrative** Staff is responsible for all financial, administrative, and cost analysis aspects of the incident.

The Farmworker CARE Coalition will need to modify this structure based on what elements are key to help the coalition operate most efficiently in case of an emergency. Based on our research the following elements of the ICS structure will be important for the coalition to develop:

- Incident Commander
- Logistics
- Information
- Safety
- Financing and Administration
- Operations

In Addition to these elements the coalition will also need to identify an organization able to provide case management following an emergency in the event the coalition decides to provide monetary or other forms of relief to victims.

### **Strategy VI-Plan Awareness and Buy-In**

Finally, the Coalition will work to implement this plan on a county level by spreading awareness and gaining the buy-in of first and second responders as well as crucial governmental and nonprofit organizations that coordinate emergency and disaster response in the County. The awareness and buy in by these entities are critical to the plans effectiveness.

The next section provides recommended activities related to these strategies and research findings highlighted in the literature review.



## RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

The above outlined preliminary strategies for the coalition have been created to address the most urgent issues impacting equal access for farmworker communities during emergencies. The following chart highlights activities within each of the above outlined strategies in relation to key findings from the research conducted for the preparation of this Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Key Research Finding	Strategy	Activity
Lack of trust between agencies, service providers, and the community	I(c)	Strengthen relationships between agencies on the coalition with the farmworker community (Poder Popular comités)
Latinos rely on social and family networks for information and support during emergencies	I(a)	Create and Implement an Emergency Preparedness Program for community residents that designed to be delivered by community members.
	I(b)	Create a network of community residents with specific roles and integrate them into an Incident Command Structure.
Farmworker communities did not have adequate information about resources available to them or their eligibility to receive services or resources	I (a)	Include in the Emergency Preparedness plan information regarding rights during an emergency
Media is a potentially good source of information in the event of an emergency (especially Spanish Media)	II(c)	Create partnerships with local media, both Spanish and non Spanish Speaking. These partnerships should include procedures establishing communication during an emergency and increasing their capacity to reach the farmworker community during an emergency.
Lack of capacity of language media to address the special circumstances of farmworker communities	III(a)	In the advocacy plan include an element specific to local media. Advocacy activities include informing them about the farmworker community in San Diego and some potential strategies sources to educate them on the farmworker community in San Diego
Lack of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate materials on preparedness, warning systems and response and relief	III(a)	Create an educational session about farmworkers in San Diego County that can be given to local partners in emergency services as well as relief agencies. The curriculum should include instruction on how to build culturally and linguistically competent messages and informational materials for farmworkers and their

		families.
Key Research Finding	Strategy	Activity
Lack of knowledge about the Latino and farmworker community among first responders and relief agencies	III(a)	Create an educational session about farmworkers in San Diego County that can be given to local partners in emergency services as well as relief agencies. The curriculum should cover demographics, community assets and the gaps in services that farmworkers experienced during the fires.
Lack of knowledge of relief agencies regarding eligibility for immigrants to relief services	III(a)	Include in the education session to local agencies information related access to relief services for undocumented immigrants.
Lack of policy related to access to relief for vulnerable communities such as farmworkers	III(b)	The Coalition will advocate at local, state and national levels for policy related to improving access to emergency preparedness information, resources and relief for vulnerable communities like farmworkers.
Lack of policy related to the presence of officials and immigration enforcement at shelters	III(b)	The Coalition will advocate at local, state and national levels for policy related to the presence of uniformed officers in shelters and relief centers during emergencies
Agencies working with vulnerable communities lack knowledge of outside resources that can be utilized to meet the needs of the community during an emergency	IV(a)	The coalition will develop and regularly update an asset matrix of agencies that can be resources in the event of an emergency. Potential assets include churches, food banks, fire stations etc.
Latino communities have limited access to basic resources and relief supplies both during and immediately following an emergency	IV(b)	Communities will be informed about local assets through the local community leaders trained through Poder Popular and included in the coalition ICS.
Warning system infrastructure does not take into account the structure of the farmworker community	V(a)	Create an inventory of the main neighborhoods, migrant camps, and trailer parks where farmworkers live to ensure communication and information is disseminated to these areas during an emergency. Integrate this knowledge into the ICS structure.
Agencies working with vulnerable communities such as farmworkers do not have the capacity to function effectively during an emergency.	V(b)	Create an ICS structure that will ensure an organized and timely response to emergencies. The ICS will have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and protocols related to emergency response for participating coalition partners.
During an emergency it is critical that synergy and strong ties exist between agencies that serve vulnerable communities.	V(b)	Establish an Incident Command Structure among coalition agencies that is based upon mutual respect, cooperation and transparency.
	II(a)	Identify and increase coalition membership to strengthen our ability to respond to the multitude of needs for the

## NEXT STEPS

“Coming out of the Dark: Emergency Preparedness Plan for Farmworker Communities in San Diego” is intended to be a working document. As this first volume indicates, steps have already been taken toward implementing many of the strategies proposed. As the planning and implementation progress, we anticipate that the strategies and activities will be expanded and refined.

Based upon urgency immediate next steps include:

1. Creation of the community based preparedness comités should be a first priority for the coalition.
2. Creating a communication structure based on the ICS so that the coalition is immediately able to respond to an emergency.
3. Funding should be sought to continue to fund the community preparedness piece.
4. Funding should be sought to fund the agency education about farmworker communities that was identified as important in this plan.

As these steps are implemented and the plan further revised the coalition will be seeking out the assistance of new partners to ensure that the plan is relevant and applicable to other preparedness work being done in San Diego County. This document will also be reviewed by local experts in emergency preparedness and distributed for review nationally as a way to ensure that it is updated and relevant. Finally, we see this plan as potentially serving as a best practice for other regions of the country hoping to also create an emergency preparedness plan for vulnerable communities such as farmworkers. We look forward to collaborating with such agencies in ensuring that no community in the United States is left in the dark when disasters occur.

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## APPENDICES

The following appendices are background documents and documents in progress as the coalition moves forward with implementing the emergency preparedness plan. Several appendices are also designed to be resources for organizations wishing to establish an emergency preparedness plan.



## MINUTES FROM PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### **Minutes from the Emergency Planning Committee**

Thursday, October 23, 2008

Vista Community Clinic

Vista, CA

#### **Emergency Plan Development update:**

A list of people who can help in case of an emergency, their cell phone numbers, and locations where they can assist is needed. These people may provide shelter for immediate need (4-12 hrs) but are encouraged to take advantage of any shelter that becomes available. If victims do not wish to stay at the shelters, they should at least go to the shelters to receive food and information. Another recommendation was to identify people in need and distribute goods to them if they would not approach a shelter.

Members from the committee were advised to contact the community relations department from the Red Cross to get updates while standing by during a disaster. It was agreed for Sandra Carmona, Konane Martinez, and Mimi Van Koughnett to be the main contacts with the Red Cross and responsible for reporting back to the leaders.

Transportation was identified as a major need. The Red Cross does not provide transportation. Different options were explored but a solution to this problem is pending.

Asset mapping- the intention is to create a list of local resources (e.g. churches, food banks, schools) from different areas to contact for help in case of disaster. Only Pala has turned in this information, the rest of the group is pending. Anna Hoff will be contacting members from the different areas to request this information and finalize this resource. The identified sites will serve as temporary evacuation points.

An Incident Command System (ICS) handout was distributed. The planning committee is to be structured in this manner. During the next meeting, members will be assigned roles and responsibilities according to this model.

### **Minutes from the Emergency Planning Committee**

Thursday, November 20, 2008

San Marcos Unified School District Offices

San Marcos, California

#### **Emergency Preparedness Training Program update:**

Sandra- Training will be on Saturday, November 22, 2008; ten promotoras are expected to attend from Pala, another ten from Lilac Oaks, and two more from Leticia's group.

Elva- eight promotoras were trained and are doing presentations now. So far, there are no problems with the content of the presentation. The American Red Cross donated 99 backpacks to distribute to the promotoras.

Four promotoras from Fallbrook have been trained. One of the problems promotoras are encountering is that people do not want to provide their phone numbers. Yet, it is necessary to include phone numbers because there is a suspicion of fraud in surveys and because these numbers can be registered in the reverse 911 system.

Alternative sources of funding are needed to increase the number of people reached by the Emergency Preparedness Training program and to train bilingual volunteers to be used during a disaster. The goal is to reach 1,500 individuals with current funding. Promotoras receive a \$25 dollar stipend for each class they teach it is required that ten people are present for the presentation.

The San Diego Foundation was suggested by Linda Chase as a potential funder; they will be accepting preparedness proposals in January 2009. Vista Community Clinic is in charge of seeking funds.

Some of the feedback received about the curriculum from the promotoras and coordinators is that:

- The last part of the curriculum needs to be updated to include the phone numbers of the agencies listed, people are requesting these numbers.
- A smoke detector needs to be added to the emergency kit. A lot of people who participated in the trainings claimed they have never seen one nor have one in their homes.
- An extinguisher demonstration model is necessary to show people how to use one.
- Include information on reverse 911 and a form promotoras can use to register phone numbers.

The members of the coalition recommended clarifying people that if they choose to enroll in the reverse 911 system they will only be called in case of an emergency; people can use a general address if they do not want to provide theirs. Calling 211 was presented as an alternative to the reverse 911 system because it provides information in Spanish and it is available 24/7.

When addressing the need to include smoke detectors, it was discussed that some people disable fire detectors when battery goes low or when they are cooking to avoid the beeping sound, so people need to be educated on the importance of making sure smoke detectors are activated. Some fire departments and CERT should be contacted about donating smoke detectors to include in the emergency kits.

### **Rental Assistance/Relief Fund update:**

The goal is to spend funds by the end of the year. The funds for rental assistance are nearly done, about \$2,000 left. There is \$30,000 in food vouchers and \$17,000 in clothing vouchers. People are still struggling, there is very little work and lots of needs. It was proposed utilizing the remaining funds to make packages for promotoras and farmworkers as holiday assistance or to identify specific things needed and buy

them to then be distributed. Patti Hamic-Christenser needs to know by the end of the week which items are needed because it takes several trips to buy these. It was suggested to double check with funders about the new direction the coalition has decided just to keep clear communication on the spending of funds.

The holiday assistance is accessible to any members of the coalition working with farmworkers who are still in need due to the fires, use non-rental assistance forms. There are no limits on clothing and food assistance but given the large number of people in need the coalition does not want to give multiple aid especially if individuals are getting help from other organizations. Please provide Patti with numbers and type of need, also what is needed for the camps, so she can create a budget.

#### **Linda Chase Community Recovery Team update:**

Linda needs to know what the coalition has been doing to provide relief to farmworkers affected by the fires, the number of new clients, the current needs, and what is needed for 2009 so that she can present this information on December 9, 2008 at an Emergency Recovery meeting that will take place at the United Way Building. The intent is to bring resources to help the coalition.

#### **Emergency Plan Development update:**

Cruz will check and inform the coalition on the status of the emergency card the Red Cross was going to produce in Spanish to be distributed in the preparedness classes.

The mapping of camps continues to be discussed among the coalition members. This mapping needs to be part of the emergency plan but members are concerned about this document landing in the wrong hands (e.g., minutemen). It needs to be determined how would it be used and which entity will be the keeper and protector of this map. Another issue is accuracy; the coalition does not have a good idea on the number of camps. It was proposed to work with local partners to collect some census data and to involve the county to reach population on camps. A list is needed to have it be useful in case of a disaster with the consensus that it should not be a public document. Migrant education is a good resource to use when making this list because they know the crop rotation. The mapping of camps merits further consideration.

#### **Minutes from the Emergency Planning Committee**

Thursday, December 18, 2008  
Vista Community Clinic  
Vista, California

#### **Disaster Plan update:**

- a) Communication Systems- the coalition needs to set up a structure to communicate in the event of a disaster.
  - o Phone tree- people directly responsible for communicating in certain areas. The outreach workers will communicate with the area coordinator and the community. The coalition needs to identify who is working in the different areas and assign people accordingly.

- b) Save heavens- need to contact possible churches or other organizations and explain to them that they will act as a temporary shelter, the role they will play during a disaster and describe their level of involvement.
- c) CARE Emergency Structure – develop a map of areas to serve. This map will help to identify people in need and distribute resources; identify specific areas within the city; analyze resources and know if they are willing to help; and to assign work for agencies in the coalition.

### **Next steps:**

- Hold a NIMS training- proposed for mid-February to inform and delegate individual responsibilities that match the individual's strengths and interests.
  - Members of the coalition were encouraged to take the NIMS training online (at least the 100 & 700 courses) before having the class.
  - Keep track of members who complete the training; important to have trained people because federal grants ask for this requirement.
  
- Call for a special meeting with people who work with camps and identify in a map the areas they serve.

### **Emergency Preparedness Training Program:**

Promotores from Pala received their training in November; there were 6 promotores from Pala and 5 for Lilac Oaks. The certificates have not been issued yet because the Poder Popular logo will be added- will be emailed to have the certificates printed. Promotores from Vista/Fallbrook have presented to about 320 individuals.

There are some continuing issues with the curriculum. It is necessary to identify a systematic way to enroll people for the reverse 911 system and explain that what this system is and that they do not need to provide an exact address, a nearby location is fine. Sandra will add information about the reverse 911 system to the curriculum.

Potential funding sources:

The San Diego foundation is awarding money for emergency preparedness programs- this could be a good source for funding promotoras work.

Bonnie with Red Cross submitted a proposal with another foundation for the promotoras to continue their work in the community. Response is pending.

### **American Red Cross Volunteer Training Plans:**

The Red Cross is training city groups to activate community service workers to open shelters and run reliefs in case of a disaster with the understanding that aid is open to all. The goal is for these shelters to be safe heavens for all people who need it.

Types of shelters:

1. County Red Cross supported shelter
2. Privately run
3. Temporary evacuation

### **Minutes: Monthly Meeting January 2009**

#### **Farmworker CARE Coalition**

Coordination/Communication, Advocacy/Access, Research/Resources, Empowerment/Education.

Thursday, January 22, 2009

Vista Community Clinic

Vista, California

**Meeting facilitated by Konane Martinez, CSUSM/NLRC**

#### **Welcome and brief history of the CARE Coalition-Konane Martinez**

Meeting Logistics: This CARE coalition meeting was held in Vista. Every other month the coalition will continue to meet at the School District offices and on opposite Thursdays we will make an effort to schedule CARE meeting in the sites that we serve to allow community participation.

The C.A.R.E. Coalition: Coordination/Communication, Advocacy/Access, Research/Resources, and Empowerment/Education is made up of diverse agencies and organizations dedicated to improving the living and working conditions of agricultural workers in San Diego's North County.

As of this week there are 54 agencies that are members of the coalition and growing. We have been able to work on Farm worker needs, but the fires have taught us that we still need to better our organization to stay better connected and organized. This is also the next step in to getting the CARE coalition prepared for any future emergency.

#### **Updates:**

##### **Disaster Planning-**

- a. Churches/Places of Worship Connections  
Members of the coalition were asked to identify churches that could serve as temporary shelters and to contact these organizations to find out if they will be willing to do so. The contact person will explain the process of becoming a temporary shelter or safe heaven. Differences between these two were discussed: a temporary shelter is open to the public whereas a safe heaven is not open for everyone in the community; only certain individuals will have information about it and it will not be listed as a shelter. The place will decide whether to operate as a temporary shelter or safe heaven.

The following are some churches to contact:

- San Luis Rey/ Oceanside
- St. Peter's/ Fallbrook
- St. Steven's
- Pilgrim Church/ Carlsbad
- Community centers

b. Campsite, Daylabor Site Mapping

The campsite/daylabor data were reviewed and members pointed to agencies working in the different areas. It was suggested to identify where people are living, have an estimated numbers, and assess transportation capabilities in case of an emergency. Another suggestion was to contact a representative from Agriculture Weights and Measures or the Farm Bureau to try to determine the possibility of implementing training for Emergency Preparedness.

c. Communication structure

The strategy for communication is to get contact people in the camps and to register people in the reverse 911 system.

The Office of Emergency Services created a form to register people in the 911 reverse system and will drop off hard copies to be distributed to CARE members. The form is in English. People who are concerned about providing personal information may give an alias, what is important is to have a nearby location.

d. Emergency structure

The coalition needs to identify areas to cover. Transportation continues to be a major issue. Two solutions were suggested: 1) to work with places that have transportation or 2) to coordinate for transportation pick up points.

The county is responsible for providing transportation if a safe haven or temporary shelter does not have it.

CARE members will receive training on what actions to take during an emergency. The American Red Cross will facilitate a tabletop exercise to familiarize members with the process.

The first training will take place during February, prior to the training, members need to take the online classes; Konane will email the link for the classes.

Ivette from the OES will conduct training to provide a general overview during an emergency.

### **Rental Assistance/Relief fund**

All the funds were spent as agreed during last meeting.

## **Homeless Count**

Interfaith Community Services will be helping with the count. No one from the coalition will participate in the count.

### **Announcements:**

- Poder Popular will present at the migrant conference. Poder Popular will start training promotores in February. Three new sites to do work have been identified:  
Pala – Rainbow  
Vista – Oceanside  
Fallbrook - De Luz
- There is \$10,000 in medical assistance funds available for farmworkers affected by the fires.
- HIV outreach numbers have been met. The report is due in April.
- Cuida tu Salud pamphlets- it was requested to return the evaluation attached in the pamphlet or any feedback on how the pamphlets were received by the community. This information is needed by the end of February.
- The Federal Defenders Attorney requested to encourage people to remember a contact number of a family member given that many of the detainees cannot provide this information to inform their relatives they have been arrested.

## **ASSETS IDENTIFIED TO DATE**

Please see attached file for a list of assets identified to date

See attachment: Asset Mapping Document

## **PREPAREDNESS CURRICULUM FOR FARMWORKER COMMUNITIES**

Please see attached for a copy of the train the trainer preparedness curriculum for farmworker communities developed by Poder Popular in collaboration with the American Red Cross and the Office of Emergency Preparedness, County of San Diego.

See attachment: Preparedness Curriculum