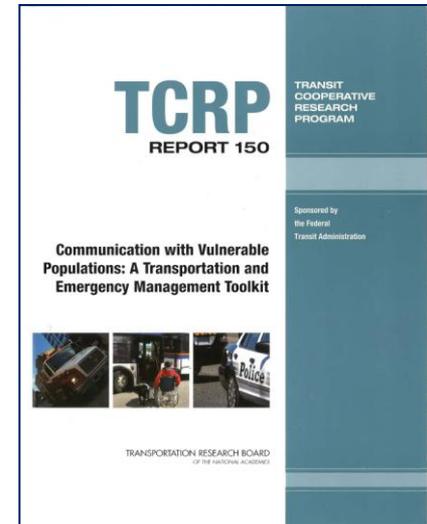


COMMUNICATION WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS:

A Transportation and Emergency Management Toolkit



**Transportation Research Board
Transit Cooperative Research Program**

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February 22, 2012*



Communication with the public, especially with people with access and functional needs, is an essential function that often fails in emergencies.

- Before an emergency, communication planning is difficult to fund, staff, and equip.
- Afterwards, communication planning is at the top of every “do it differently next time” list.
- Resilience requires “whole community” communications: “Trust builds speed.” (Lt. Gen. Honorè, ret.)

Toolkit Supports FEMA “Whole Community” Initiative

- FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, Version 2 (released in late 2010) emphasizes whole community preparedness, to include those with access and functional needs, children, and with service animals or pets.
- TCRP was ahead of the curve in sponsoring this research and Toolkit. Research identified mandates and recommendations for collaboration with community groups to enhance preparedness, but little or no guidance for how to do this.
- CPG 101, Step 1 is “Form a Collaborative Planning Team” – TCRP Report 150 provides step by step “how to” instruction, supported by tools and templates.

Who/ what are vulnerable populations?

The term vulnerable populations, as used in the Toolkit, employs the Emergency Management National Response Framework definition which says “special needs” populations may have additional needs before, during and after an incident in functional areas, such as:

- Maintaining independence
- Communication
- Transportation
- Supervision
- Medical care

They are often constrained by:

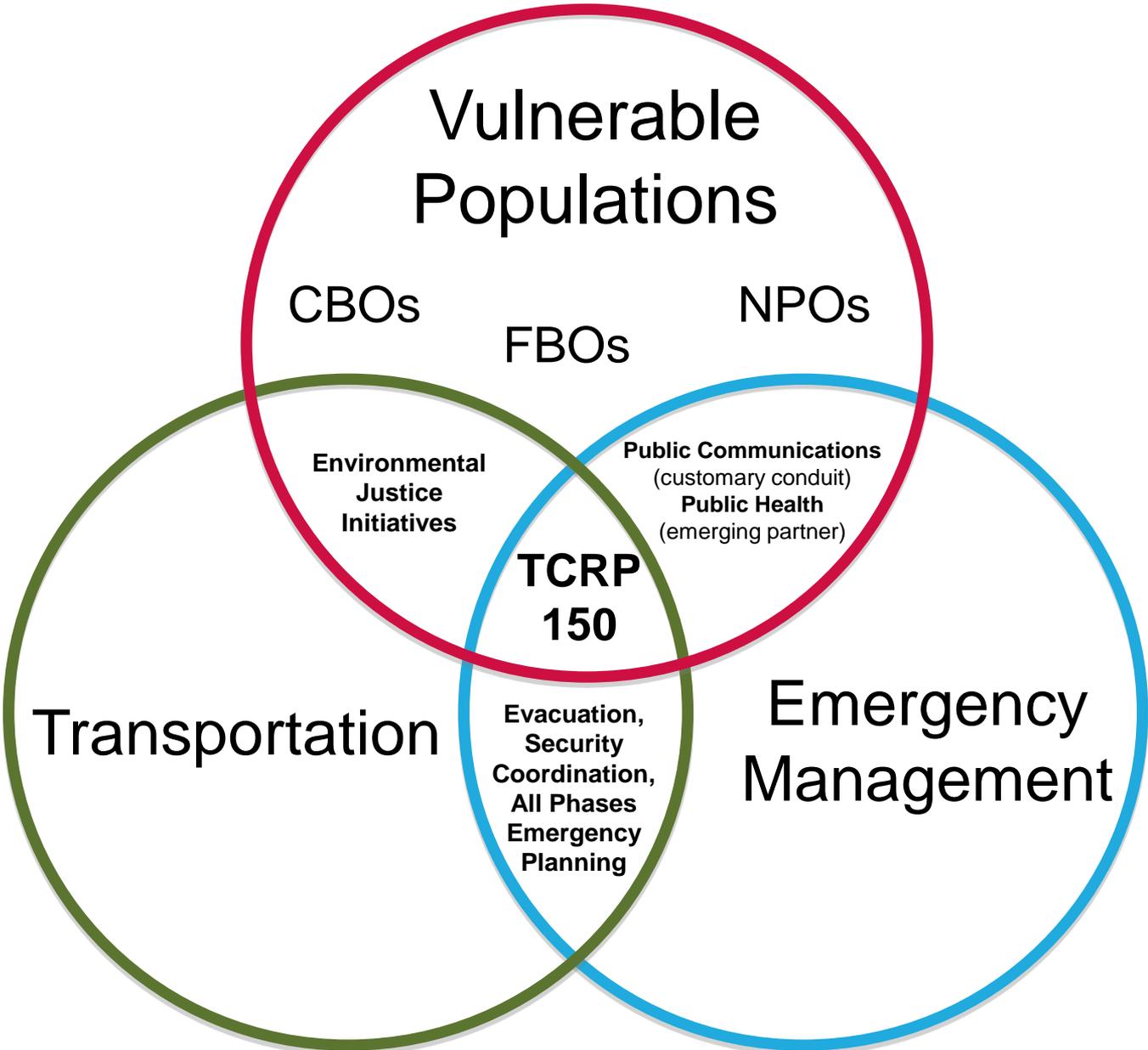
- Poverty
- Physical or mental disability
- Health issues
- Low English proficiency
- Transportation disadvantage
- Age

and especially by combinations of these.



What the Toolkit is – and isn't

- The toolkit does **not** focus on activities or specific messages for emergency planning, response and recovery.
- The toolkit does **not** assign the leadership role for developing the communications network – that's local.
- It lays out a process for building the collaborative partnerships necessary to engage and empower entire communities to communicate “X” messages and implement “Y” activities.
- The toolkit's foundation is communication that fosters “pervasive preparedness”, meaning, ideally, that **most** of the people have **most** of the information they need to be ready for **most** of what can happen **most** of the time.



Project Tasks

- Literature review
- Interviews with experts – many disciplines
- Evaluate lessons learned
- Identify issues/concerns of emergency managers, transportation managers and others (re communications)
- Identify issues/barriers to communication with vulnerable population groups
- Field test and evaluate the DRAFT toolkit and revise
- Final toolkit and outreach around publication

Four Steps and the Tools to Do Them

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Chapter 1: **Gather Information`**
 - Tools
 - Additional Information
- Chapter 2: **Build or Add to a Network**
 - Tools
 - Additional Information
- Chapter 3: **Communicate Through the Network**
 - Tools
 - Additional Information
- Chapter 4: **Sustain the Network**
 - Tools
 - Additional Information
- Conclusion, Glossary

Chapter 1: Gather Information

Steps:

1. Get started
2. Collect community population information
3. Assess hazards & community vulnerability
4. Assess agency and other local resources
5. Identify existing networks
6. Keep a contact list

Tools:

- Securing leadership buy-in
- Tips on identifying vulnerable populations
- Working with MPOs
- Working with RTPOs
- Potential network partners
- Network contact database



Poverty is baseline for vulnerability – and capability to prepare or respond.

Chapter 2: Build or Add to Network

Steps:

1. Begin outreach to key people
2. Convene people in the community
3. Manage meeting logistics
4. Update contact lists
5. Plan next steps
6. Transition to an organized network
7. Set parameters
8. Document the work

Tools:

- Network fact sheet
- Sample invitation
- Meeting accommodation form
- Planning accessible meetings
- Meeting agendas
- Making meetings work tips
- Sample presentation outline
- Sign-in form
- Follow-up memo template
- Goals and objectives template

Chapter 3: Communicate Through the Network

Steps:

1. Define communication procedures
2. Establish communication roles and responsibilities
3. Assess communication resources
4. Reassess hazards & community vulnerability
5. Plan for communicating
6. Test the network with real communication
7. Document the work

Tools:

- Network members roles and responsibilities
- Network member planning checklist
- Communication channels by sector
- Registries “fact sheet”
- Communicating with vulnerable populations tips
- How to conduct a network test
- Alert template



People live in self-defined communities with others they perceive to be like them in meaningful ways. Credibility and trust start here.

Chapter 4: Sustain the Network

Steps:

- Engage network members regularly
- Update network contacts
- Strategically grow the network
- Form agreements
- Equip network members to perform their roles
- Evaluate policy implications
- Establish common terminology
- Evaluate and improve the network
- Document the work

Tools:

- Social media tips
- Contact information update
- Forming agreements tips
- Network-building checklist
- Performance measures for communicating with vulnerable populations
- Designing and implementing baseline and post-activation surveys
- Post-event evaluation tool

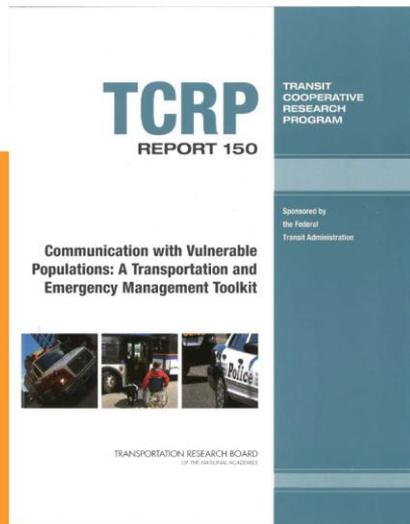
What the Process + Tools Can Help Communities Do

- Build a network of trusted individuals representing many population groups
- Seek out connected organizations that already work well in communities
- Engage and empower all parts of communities
- Conduct “exercises” of the network in non-emergency situations
- Respect the power of the trusted messenger and the media, as well as the message itself

Summing Up

- Be inclusive – invites, meetings, exercises (look/ ask for who's missing and keep branching out)
- Think, act ACCESSIBLE 24/7 (accommodations, messages, transportation- ask what works/ ask many in many formats)
- Listen (then listen some more)

COMMUNICATION^{with} VULNERABLE POPULATIONS



A TRANSPORTATION &
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
TOOLKIT

TCRP Report 150 is available
for download now :

www.TRB.org/SecurityPubs

The full document is
available in pdf, and all
templates and tools are
available for download in
Word format from this site:



This toolkit provides step by step guidance with supporting tools and templates to build a robust communications network. It shows how to find and then create collaborative partnerships with the agencies and community organizations that are already working with the people you need to reach in an emergency, with tips on making meetings accessible, obtaining leadership buy-in, and much more.

A print copy can be purchased
from the TRB online bookstore:
www.trb.org/Finance/Bookstore.aspx



A **free print copy** can be ordered from:
<http://www.tcrponline.org/bin/publications.pl>



TCRP Report 150

- To download the full report and ready-to-use templates and tools: TRB.org/SecurityPubs
- To purchase a print copy: trb.org/Finance/bookstore.aspx
- To order a free print copy: tcrponline.org/bin/publications.pl

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