

**Disaster Preparation, Response and Evaluation**



..... including roles and responsibilities of the Bishop, District Superintendents, Conference and District Disaster Coordinators, and the Local Church.

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## Introduction

The American Red Cross defines a disaster as: "An emergency that causes injury or loss of life and property damage, and a disruption in which survivors cannot manage without spiritual, monetary, or physical assistance." Disaster preparedness and response must be a vital part of our church mission. We are called to love one another. One of the ways we can show the love and act as the hands, feet and face of Jesus is through the efforts we make in the community and around the world.

The church is not just four walls and a roof. People may never attend church but, in a disaster or time of loss, they immediately turn to the church for help. In a disaster situation the church can become not only a spiritual but also a critical resource of the community.

There are four levels which to describe the severity of disasters. The level of a disaster determines the extent of response.

- **Level 4: Small local disaster affecting *less than 40 households*, which is within the capabilities of local community resources.**

### **Relief**

- Initially the local church may need some help from the district or conference.
- Volunteers from within the community and nearby churches assist with crisis counseling, cleanup and emergency repairs.
- The bishop may request the churches within the conference take a special offering.
- One or two ERT/Care teams may be brought in to work alongside local volunteers.

### **Recovery**

- One or two people could perform all of the management functions i.e. provide ministry of caring, manage cases, and coordinate volunteer management, donations, and networking of resources.

- **Level 3: Medium-sized disaster affecting *40 to 150 households*, beyond the capabilities of local community resources.**

### **Relief**

- Local churches must have assistance.
- The bishop should solicit an offering from its churches as soon as possible.
- A segment of the Conference Disaster Response Center mobilizes for assessment and management.
- Site management of volunteers in place as soon as possible for crisis counseling, cleanup and emergency repairs.

### **Recovery**

- An interfaith or United Methodist recovery team is necessary, with a paid director or a skilled, long-term volunteer whose expenses are reimbursed.
- The team will administer the operation, assisted by volunteers and a paid case manager.

- **Level 2: Large disaster, and *usually receive a presidential declaration*. Requires full mobilization of the Conference Disaster Response Center.**

### **Relief**

- Resources from the conference and UMCOR are essential.
- The Disaster Response Center performs full operational functions.

- A conference-wide appeal must be made for funds, appropriate in-kind donations and volunteers. UMCOR money also is needed.
- Early Response Teams and Information & Referral (I&R) workers.

### **Recovery**

- Paid staff for case management within community-based recovery organizations, and conference-wide coordination of volunteers necessary.
  - Numerous teams of short-term volunteers for repair and rebuilding needed for a year or more.
- **Level 1: A catastrophic** disaster is defined by Public Law 93-288 as: *"An event resulting in a large number of deaths and injuries; extensive damage or destruction of facilities that place an overwhelming demand on state and local response resources and mechanisms; a severe impact on national security facilities and infrastructures that sustain them; a severe long-term effect on general economic activity and severe effects on state, local and private sector initiatives to begin and sustain initial response activities."*

### **Relief**

- Entire conference response organization mobilized.
- A number of people in conference leadership positions probably victims themselves.
- UMCOR mentors may be necessary to fill slots of those in conference disaster leadership who are unable to function.
- Conference-wide appeal made for funds, appropriate in-kind donations. -Early Response Teams (ERTs) and Care teams mobilized.
- UMCOR money needed, as will be Information & Referral (I&R) workers. -A denomination-wide special appeal may be made.

### **Recovery**

- -As in Level III, hired staff for leadership positions (UMCOR funds can be used) needed rather than utilizing long-term volunteers.
- -Case managers and workers necessary.
- -Numerous teams of short-term volunteers required over a period of several years.
- To ensure timeliness, provide the maximum available resources, avoid redundancy and provide an effective and appropriate response, the church must be ready, at all levels, when disaster strikes. This means planning and preparation before disaster strikes.

The visible presence of the church is essential in any type of disaster, regardless of the extent of damage. The conference, districts, and local churches with their many volunteer groups are vital links to a huge network of caring responders from faith based organizations. (Allow the Holy Spirit to work through you by just being there, being available.) Together they will provide to people in need three types of response:

**THE SPIRITUAL RESPONSE** addresses the issue of seeing how God's presence is available in the midst of suffering, despair and grief.

- ✓ The primary task: is to be present in the midst of suffering and spiritual crisis, acting as an agent of reconciliation with spiritual support and encouragement. -The bishop when on site provides an "awesome presence."
- ✓ Local pastors wearing clerical collars as visible example of the presence of the church.
- ✓ Teams of people trained in giving spiritual and emotional care (Care Teams), Stephen ministers and chaplains available, and UMCOR is willing to train more people at the local church level.

**THE EMOTIONAL RESPONSE** addresses the problems of loneliness, shock, disbelief, delayed grief, and a multitude of related emotions that accompany those disasters that affect the lives of people, both victims and responders.

- ✓ Pastors, Stephen ministers, and other lay leaders (UMCOR trained) assist in meeting the needs of people in such trying times.

**THE PHYSICAL RESPONSE** most immediately seen and needed. The physical response must address itself to facilities, finances and an unending list of unique needs that may or may not be immediately seen.

- ✓ Trained individuals and teams, such as ERTs, Care teams and volunteer management teams man shelters and mass feeding locations. No matter how inadequate one may feel one's skills and talents are in responding to people in need, never underestimate the power of presence.

With this in mind the Northern Illinois Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (NIC) has organized this plan as a structure to facilitate the ability of the conference, the districts and the local churches to be in ministry to persons in need as a result of a disaster.

When a disaster is imminent or has occurred, local authorities take immediate steps to warn and evacuate its citizens, alleviate suffering, and protect life and property. The disaster authority and responsibility is conferred through state and local laws, centered in the Office of Emergency Management (EMA), Emergency Services and Disaster Agency (ESDA), or similarly name Emergency Services agency. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will call upon the American Red Cross (ARC), Salvation Army and other government recognized disaster response agencies for support. After the initial emergency response, Volunteers Organizations Active in Response (VOAD) and similar volunteer groups respond. If the situation exceeds local relief resources, regional, state and federal assistance can be asked for. When federal assistance is requested and the United States President declares a "federal disaster," the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will bring support.

In the event of a disaster, resources available to the local church (i.e. volunteers, money, expertise, etc.) are oftentimes limited. This is where the connectional system of the United Methodist Church can provide support and resources to the local church to respond effectively and appropriately. Through training, planning and preparation, the following individuals and teams could be active in disaster response in the NIC as a positive force, independent of the nature, size and location of the disaster:

- ❖ Bishop, VIM Coordinator, and District Superintendents
- ❖ Conference Disaster Coordinator and District Disaster Coordinators
- ❖ The Conference Disaster Response Committee and Disaster Response Center staff (DRC)
- ❖ Volunteers in Mission
- ❖ Local Church Pastors
- ❖ Local Church Disaster Coordinators
- ❖ Local Church Volunteers

This plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of those involved in disaster response in the NIC as well as outlining processes to ensure the seamless flow of information and assistance to those affected by disaster. Each district cluster and local church within the NIC is encouraged to create their own Disaster Response Plan, unique to their particular locale, circumstances and resources, while consistent with and contributing

to the conference plan.

## Purpose

- 1. To resource and equip local United Methodist churches** as they assist their communities and individuals to prepare, respond and recover from disaster.
- 2. To provide immediate relief for acute human need and to respond to the suffering** of persons in our communities caused by natural or manmade disaster.
- 3. To work cooperatively** with the appropriate conference units, ecumenical bodies, interdenominational agencies and local government agencies in the identification of, advocacy for, and assistance with ministries for disaster recovery.
- 4. To provide direct communication** from the conference to the national offices of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and United Methodist Volunteers in Mission to obtain needed resources and assistance for disaster-stricken areas inside the conference, or to provide available resources and assistance to areas in need outside of the conference.
- 5. To initiate printed, audiovisual, electronic, web-based and other resources** intended to interpret, support, and communicate with other conferences and churches concerning appeals for help and information related to ministry for disaster response.
- 6. To work cooperatively in promotion of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering.**

...[Jesus said,] 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.' Matthew 25:40  
(The Message)

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Conference Disaster Coordinator**

The Conference Disaster Coordinator has overall responsibility for preparation for, management of, and evaluation following a disaster including:

- The point of contact for coordinating disaster response and disaster-related efforts at the conference level.
- An advocate for the District Disaster Coordinators and for clusters and local churches in their conference relative to disaster issues
- Responsible for collaborating with the VIM Coordinator to provide adequate pools of trained volunteers to serve in the relief phase (ERTs and Care teams) and the recovery phase (UMVIM teams).

### **Stage 1: Planning and preparation — Before Disaster Strikes**

1. Chair the Conference Disaster Committee in developing Conference Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan.
2. Develop and equip a Conference Disaster Response Center (CDRC) operations location and a team to staff it. The work area should be flexible to adjust to the number of people mobilized for the CDRC staff, and have the necessary communications equipment, maps and charts. Coordinate with the Regional office at 217 Division Street, Elgin, IL 60120 or 77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1820, Chicago, IL 60602.
3. Work with District Superintendents, District Disaster Coordinators, clusters, and local churches to assist them in the preparation of their disaster response plans.
4. Provide the district offices and District Disaster Coordinators with notification, contact and process information to use in the event of a disaster and, if more than one person needs to be informed, the order they should be contacted.
5. Participate in or delegate participation and build relationships with agencies active in disaster response in the conference (VOAD, COAD, LTRO, OES, interfaith organizations, etc.)
6. Collaborate with the VIM Coordinator to provide disaster training in the conference. This may include identifying training opportunities, serving as the trainer or designating a trainer, following up after training events, etc.

### **Stage 2: Warning — Disaster is Imminent**

1. Implement the conference Disaster Preparation and Response Plan.
2. Notify the Bishop of plan implementation.
3. Designate the IC for this event.
4. Activate CDRC Team and determine communications capabilities.
5. Set up and secure the DRC and, if the disaster is likely to have a severe adverse impact on the district office, identify an alternative location to work from.
6. Check for updates from OES, the media and other sources.
7. Check in with the state Office of Emergency Services office or other disaster agencies.

### **Stage 3: Emergency Response — After Disaster Strikes**

1. Assess damage to personal household and check the status of own family. Notify the bishop and office to request assistance as indicated.
2. Oversee the role of Incident Coordinator for the CDRC and manage DRC operations.
3. Assist the office of the bishop in developing a site visit soon as possible. The purpose of the visit is to survey the extent of damage and confer with local pastors and officials regarding needs. Other people on the site visit should include the VIM Coordinator, Director of Communications, and the local District Superintendent.

### **Stage 4: Relief**



Continue oversight of Incident Coordinator for the CDRC and manage DRC operations. Develop a system to rotate team members in and out of their positions so they are not working over 12 hours at a time. Remember to perform self-care.

**Stage 5: Long Term Recovery**

1. Prepare to close out the DRC and transition to long-term recovery operations.
2. Identify staff to work in recovery. Appoint Area Representatives to work in the field, if appropriate.
3. Collaborate and cooperate with agencies and organizations involved in long-term recovery to provide assistance and training as appropriate.
4. Administer the grant process developed by the Conference Disaster Administrative Team.
5. Function as liaison between the Conference and UMCOR.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Conference Disaster Response Committee**

The Conference Disaster Response Committee's primary role is to provide the administrative framework that enables the rest of the conference offices, district, cluster and local teams to plan for and to respond to a disaster effectively and in a timely fashion. This includes:

- Overseeing the development and implementation of policies and procedures for disaster response in the NIC;
- Establishing short term and long term strategies for disaster response, including guidelines for the role of the conference, district, clusters and local churches in long term recovery and determining if advocacy is needed at the state level;
- Plan and implement training events at the ERT and UMVIM Leader level for the NIC districts, clusters and local churches.
- Administering the grant process, including grant criteria, approvals, accountability structure and audits;
- Identifying staff needs.

The Conference Disaster Coordinator serves as the chair. District Disaster Coordinators and others representing either disaster response expertise or regional representatives sit on the committee. Regional representatives serve as the "eyes, mouth and ears" helping to interpret the work of the committee to local pastors and laity and can perform the initial on-site assessments of their area as soon as possible after disaster strikes. Conference staff represented on this committee should include treasurer, Director of Communications, and Director of Connectional Ministries.

Conference decision-makers -the bishop or assistant, cabinet representative, lay leader, council director, conference fiscal officer and conference communicator — although involved and informed, do not necessarily serve actively on the committee.

An executive group should be formed and empowered to make decisions, especially on release of funds up to a certain level, without having to poll the entire group.

This committee is not "operational." e.g. members of the committee do not necessarily grab shovels and jump into the mud, nor do they micro-manage the disaster response effort. This group sets broad policies and procedures related to the disaster response effort/

Some who serve on the Conference Disaster Response Committee may have the desires, skills and time to give to the relief effort. However, this group as a whole, which should be composed of top-level conference and district leaders, does not have the time nor is it suited to do a good job of managing or performing normal day-to-day disaster operations.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Conference Disaster Response Center (CDRC)

The goal of the disaster response ministry of the NIC is to effectively manage the resources available to our churches when a level 2, 3, or 4 disaster strikes, including information, supplies, volunteers and financial assistance. This resource management is coordinated through the Disaster Response Center where staff and volunteers work closely with the district, cluster and church disaster coordinators and outside relief agencies to ensure clear lines of communication and effective coordination of resources. The center is located in the appropriate regional conference office based on the disaster location. Regional office at 217 Division Street, Elgin, IL 60120 or 77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1820, Chicago, IL 60602.

The CDRC runs the initial relief phase of the conference's response operation. The relief phase is fast-paced. Its work is done on a broad scale, providing only a temporary fix to as many survivors as possible. Figuratively speaking, *the CDRC could be viewed as the first aid station of disaster response, putting on bandages and stopping bleeding to provide safety, sanitation and security:*

- determining the status of churches and districts plus pastors and staff throughout the area;
- determining the immediate needs and coordinating outside resources to provide help,
- coordinating with local and state Offices of Emergency Service informing UMCOR and others of details and needs passing on details and follow-up information.

Disaster operations are organized differently in the relief versus the recovery phase. The relief phase, when the disaster seems to have a life of its own, is very fluid and almost chaotic at times. Consequently, a more deliberate and structured management system is required. The Incident Command System (ICS) or as the United Methodist Church prefers to call it: The Incident Coordination System is required. In U.S. ICS is required of all governmental agencies under NIMS.

ICS breaks disaster response management into manageable segments, specifically the five functions of leadership, planning, logistics, operations, and administration/finance. Each function does not necessarily require independent staffing. Initially, or in a small event, one or two individuals may perform several functional roles. As the complexity of the response increases, so does the size of the staff. When things calm down, the ICS structure can scale back and reduce its size to one or two people to perform all the functions.

ICS depends on functions, not people. Over time, people can be rotated into the CDRC to perform a particular function as others are rotated out to return to their normal lives.

All staff and volunteers involved in disaster response have the immediate and primary responsibility to first secure the safety of their families and property in the event of a disaster. They must first care for their own before they can care for others. They should then notify their team leader or immediate supervisor as to their status and ability to help. The team leader or supervisor should then notify the CDRC, as appropriate.

As the initial flurry of chaotic activity is replaced by calmer, more informed and more capable actions by the local churches involved in the disaster, the conference Disaster Response Center can reduce its efforts to over-all coordination between churches and districts, acting as a call center, working with conference communications to disseminate information through various means, and working with the VIM Coordinator to determine volunteer needs, where and what skills as needed, sources to fill the needs, and assisting in the administrative and logistical details of bringing volunteers into the disaster area.

### **Stage 1: Planning and Preparation — Before Disaster Strikes**

1. Develop the means to convert adequate work space from normal day-to-day operations to a CDRC, including multiple phone lines, computer connections (wireless or wired), working tables, maps and charts.
2. Develop procedures for all functional positions in the CDRC ICS structure.
3. Collaborate with District Disaster Teams to establish potential sites for supply depots, distribution sites, etc, which may be needed following a disaster.

### **Stage 2: Warning — Disaster is Imminent**

1. Confirms communication channels with bishop's office, crisis management team, VIM Coordinator, UMCOR and District Disaster Teams.
2. Provides timely information updates to the above as appropriate.
3. Sets up and secure the DRC work area
4. Activates the NIC disaster 800#.

### **Stage 3: Emergency Response — After Disaster Strikes**

1. Serves as the communications hub for the conference's disaster response, including:
  - a. Managing incoming calls (requests for assistance, offers of assistance, provide critical news using scripts, etc.)
  - b. Coordinating the shipment and receipt of supplies
  - c. Deploying volunteers.
2. Conducts a "roll-call" of the district offices in the impacted areas, starting with the hardest hit area first, obtaining an initial situation report. If telephone service is out, uses alternative means of communications.
3. Prepares situation reports and critical news briefings for the Conference Disaster Coordinator to present to the bishop and the crisis management team in coordination with the Communications Officer.
4. Implements steps to provide a church presence in the disaster area as soon as local emergency service officials allow.
  - a. Reminds all pastors to wear clerical collars for increased visibility.
  - b. Coordinates the bishop's visit to disaster sites.

### **Stage 4: Relief**

1. Determines communication capabilities restored in the affected areas.
2. Monitors situation reports received from State OES, NVOAD, FEMA, ARC, CWS, etc., and disseminate information throughout the conference, as appropriate.
3. Provides an initial situation report to UMCOR national headquarters.
4. Continues as communication hub.
5. The VIM Coordinator shall:
  - a. Obtain volunteer management support,
  - b. Prepare Emergency Response Teams and Care Teams for deployment,
  - c. Activate and deploy Early Response Teams and Spiritual & Emotional Care Teams as requested.
  - d. Contacts North Central Jurisdiction VIM Coordinator for additional support as needed.
  - e. Assists VIM Coordinator in administration and logistics of creating volunteer work teams assigned to work areas.

### **Stage 5: Long Term Recovery**

1. Closes out all Early Response Teams and Care Teams. Converts them to standard UMVIM teams if they desire to remain in the field.
2. Completes all required after-actions reports and conducts a meeting with the Crisis Management Team, Disaster Response Committee and the CDRC staff to discuss what went well and what needs to be improved upon.
3. Closes out the active operation of the Disaster Response Center, reducing the staff to an appropriate

- size to assist the Conference Disaster Coordinator and VIM Coordinator handle the long-term recovery tasks of volunteer management, and case management.
4. Assists in returning the CDRC to its pre-disaster condition.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Bishop

Leadership by the resident bishop is extremely important. For many, a bishop's appearance at the disaster site symbolizes the "awesome presence" of Christ and the commitment of His church to relieve the suffering. The bishop as a symbol to people who are hurting of a caring church cannot be filled by anyone else!

Communities receiving a visit are grateful that their pain was important enough for the bishop to set aside routine business. Although staff may try to "protect" a bishop's time by advising that it isn't necessary to go to a disaster area, disaster is a tragedy and the conference cannot conduct "business as usual" in the aftermath. Communication with the Disaster Response Coordinator is vital and necessary to organize, these visits.

### **Stage 1: Planning and preparation — Before Disaster Strikes**

1. Appoint, or have the conference nominating committee select, a conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
2. Appoint a Disaster Response Committee to oversee the conference Disaster Preparation and Response Plan. Conference staff represented on this committee should include: the Disaster Response Coordinator, the UMVIM Coordinator, a fiscal officer, a communicator and a cabinet representative.
3. Ensure that whoever acts on the Bishop's behalf when the Bishop is out of the office that he or she has the responsibility to implement the disaster response plan when disaster strikes (this authority should also be given to your Disaster Response Coordinator) including contacting UMCOR for assistance. (Only a bishop or designee can make this request.)
4. Ensure the conference has a property protection plan similar to that of a local church.
5. Provide appropriate assistance to the Disaster Response Coordinator in establishing the Conference Disaster Response Center. This may require that a conference room, offices, telephones and other office equipment be reassigned to the Response Center function when the plan is implemented. Coordinate with the Regional office at 217 Division Street, Elgin, IL 60120 or 77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1820, Chicago, IL 60602.

### **Stage 2: Warning — Disaster is Imminent**

1. Implement the conference Disaster Preparation and Response Plan.
2. Provide whatever staff is available to assist the Disaster Response Coordinator in establishing the Conference Disaster Response Center in the most appropriate regional office.
3. Ensure own family and that of the conference staff take actions appropriate to prepare for the event.

### **Stage 3: Emergency Response — Immediately After Disaster Strikes**

1. Assess damage to personal household and check the status of own family. If one is a victim, and cannot perform duties, notify office and get help.
2. Inform office of one's whereabouts and have them notify the conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
3. Notify UMCOR of the event its impact, and that the conference disaster plan has been implemented. (UMCOR Emergency Response Office: 202-548-4002)
4. Immediately appoint a supply pastor for any clergy who are more than minor victims of the disaster.
  - a. Pastors who are themselves victims must be allowed time to focus on their recovery.
  - b. Supply pastors would serve a minimum of one or two months and the reason for their appointment must be explained to the local church membership. Disaster funds may be used for this purpose.

### **Stage 4: Relief**

1. As soon as possible make a site visit to survey the extent of damage and confer with local pastors

and officials regarding needs. Other people on the site visit should include the Disaster Response Coordinator, VIM Coordinator, Director of Communications, and the local District Superintendent.

2. Appoint temporary assisting pastors to any impacted congregations as relief and recovery takes place. The assistant should be on site for a month or two, and be available for up to a year, rotating in and out under the direction of the pastor in charge.
3. Ensure that DC is relieved of other duties for as long as is appropriate.
4. Provide additional temporary support staff where indicated.
5. Appoint a temporary assistant district superintendent to those districts that are hardest hit.
6. To utilize an assistant as needed to one's own duties.
7. Request an emergency grant (\$10,000) from UMCOR if on-hand resources are perceived to be insufficient to meet immediate needs for relief.
8. As soon as possible, consider a conference-wide financial appeal.
9. Remember that the conference office cannot act as if it were "business as usual" if the disaster is large or catastrophic.

#### **Stage 5: Long Term Recovery**

1. Have all involved leaders meet periodically for reports and evaluations.
2. Have the conference communications office publish timely updates in the recovery phase.
3. Publicly acknowledge workers and work done.
4. Plan for a service of praise and memorial a year from the date of the disaster.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the District Superintendent**

The District Superintendent (DS) is responsible for oversight and supervision of churches and local pastors in the district where they serve. Therefore, in the event of a disaster affecting their district, it is imperative that the DS are kept informed so that they, in turn, can inform the bishop as well as minister to those in their care. Including the DS on the District Disaster Team facilitates communication and ensures that the DS has input into the response effort.

### **Stage 1: Planning and preparation — Before Disaster Strikes**

1. Appoints a District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) and work closely with the DDC to recruit a District Disaster Team.
2. As part of the District Disaster Team, develops a District Disaster Response Plan which is consistent with and contributes to the NIC disaster plan.
3. Familiar with the conference disaster plan and its application for district.
4. Encourages clusters and churches in the district to have a written disaster plan for their church.
5. As appropriate, promotes the connection between churches and the conference, reminding them that the Conference Disaster Coordinator has resources available to help serve their congregation and their community.

### **Stage 2: Warning — Disaster Strike is Imminent**

1. Confirms communication channels with the bishop's office, the DRC, the District Disaster Team, and clergy in the district.
2. Determines which churches to be the most vulnerable.
3. Assists the District Disaster Coordinator in setting up a District Disaster Team work area and, if the disaster is likely to have a severe adverse impact on the district office, identify an alternative location to work from.

### **Stage 3: Emergency Response — After Disaster Strikes**

1. Assesses damage to personal household and checks the status of own family. If personally impacted, notifies the bishop and requests help as needed.
2. Communicates with the bishop and District Disaster Coordinator.
3. Contacts pastors in affected areas to assess spiritual, physical and emotional needs and address with appropriate resources.
4. Implements steps to provide a church presence in the disaster area as soon as officials allow. Requests all pastors to wear clerical collars for increased visibility.
5. If it is safe to do so, performs an early assessment of the affected area with the DDC, the bishop, and/or other conference personnel as appropriate.
6. Report on the condition of the community and church properties to appropriate conference personnel (the Disaster Response Coordinator, or the bishop's office).

### **Stage 4: Relief**

1. If a pastor is a victim, a supply pastor appoints immediately. Note: The appointment must be for a minimum of one or two months and the purpose must be explained to the membership. If the pastor needs to be relocated from a damaged home, confirms the church takes steps to recruit volunteers to help clean up, pack and take items to storage, in a way that the family remains in charge of their affairs. Disaster funds may be used for this purpose.

Monitors church pastors, being alert to signs of burn out and/or excessive spiritual and emotional stress. If pastors are likely to be overwhelmed by church and community needs during the disaster response, appoints a temporary assistant pastor to provide an extra set of hands. The congregation will need an explanation. Disaster funds may be used for this purpose.

2. Continues contact with affected areas and site visits as appropriate. Continues the request for all pastors in the impacted areas to wear clerical collars for increased visibility.
3. Coordinates care and resources for affected clergy and pastoral families.
4. Utilizes Care Teams to address the spirituals and emotional needs of local caregivers.



5. Consider requesting an assistant interim for day-to-day duties of DS role. Again, disaster funds may be used.

**Stage 5: Long Term Recovery**

1. Continues to support and refer clergy and families for spiritual and emotional care, including professional services if indicated.
2. Publicly acknowledges those who have been working in the disaster and the work they have done,
3. Within the impacted areas, encourages cluster and local church participation in long term recovery as appropriate.
4. Encourages clusters and churches in unaffected areas to provide support to the impacted areas, through the donation of money, supplies, equipment or through UMVIM teams.
5. As appropriate, communicates with the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator regarding unmet needs that arise or areas that may need additional resources or other assistance.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Roles and Responsibilities of the District Disaster Coordinator</b></p>
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The District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) is the point of contact for coordinating disaster response and disaster-related efforts at the District level. The DDC is a partner and advocate for the local churches in their district as it relates to disaster issues as well as liaison to the District Office and the CDRC.

The structure of the District Disaster Team should be based on the ICS model and should resemble that of the CDRC, remembering that the number of people to perform the functions should be based on the needs of the district.

**Stage 1: Planning and preparation — Before Disaster Strikes**

1. Develops a District Disaster Team (DDT) that includes your District Superintendent. The DS should not be the district disaster team leader, though the DS is encouraged to be an active part of the team.
2. Develops a District Disaster Response Plan that is consistent with and contributes to the conference's disaster plan.
3. Determines a suitable location that can function as the district's communication and coordination center between the local pastors and churches and the CDRC. A conference room at the district office should suffice.
4. Identifies an alternative location to work out of in case the disaster has a severe adverse impact on the district office facility.
5. Works with clusters to assist them in the preparation of their disaster response plans.
6. Provides the cluster pastors with information on who to contact in the event of a disaster and in what order they should be contacted.
7. Participates in and builds relationships with district disaster response agencies (VOAD, COAD, LTRO, OES, interfaith organizations, etc.) If unable to participate, selects a representative from the district team so that The United Methodist Church continues to be recognized, at all levels, as a valuable partner in the disaster response community.
8. Serves as communicator and liaison with the CDRC.
9. Identifies and inventories available equipment, updates forms and procedures as necessary.
10. Working with the Conference Disaster Coordinator, coordinates disaster training in the district. This may include identifying training opportunities, serving as the trainer or designating someone to be a trainer, following up after training events, etc.

**State 2: Warning — Disaster in District is Imminent**

1. Activates District Disaster Team and confirms communications channels within the district and conference.
2. Checks for updates from the CDRC.
3. Checks in with local EOC, Emergency Services office or other local disaster agencies.
4. Sets up and secures the District Disaster Team work area and, if the disaster has a severe adverse impact on the district office, relocates to the alternative location, communicating to all involved persons the new communications channels (phone numbers, etc.).

**Stage 3: Emergency Response — After Disaster Strikes**

1. Assesses damage to own household and check the status of personal family. If one is a victim, requests assistance from the bishop.
2. Implements the District Disaster Plan.
3. Communicates status and immediate needs to the CDRC.
4. Establishes communications with local churches in district, started with the most severely impacted areas first. Inquires about the safety of the pastor(s), staff and families. Obtains an initial status report on the estimated amount of damage and other conditions and ensure appropriate phone numbers are known. Implement alternative communications if the telephone systems are out.

- 5.If appropriate, coordinates and participates in early assessment of the affected area with other conference personnel.

#### **Stage 4: Relief**

- 1.Determines when telephone communication capabilities have been restored.
- 2.Identifies special needs and activities with the CDRC and local agencies.
- 3.As appropriate, continues to coordinate and participate in assessment of the affected area with other conference personnel.
- 4.Working in concert with the volunteer district UMVIM Coordinator:
  - a. Identifies affected areas for placement of volunteer ERTs and Care Teams.
  - b. Identifies a local volunteer manager for each area to receive and coordinate volunteers.

#### **Stage 5: Long-Term Recovery**

- 1.As appropriate, works with Conference Disaster Coordinator to provide information and resources to assist in establishing a long-term recovery presence in your area.
- 2.Continues church presence and relationship building with local agencies in your district.
- 3.Once a community begins long-term recovery, focus shifts back to mitigation and preparedness.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Cluster

The primary point of contact at the community level for all United Methodist assistance in a disaster is the local United Methodist Church. However, the local church is not expected to respond alone or in a vacuum as there are many resources available to assist the church. By working in clusters with the District Disaster Coordinator and the conference Disaster Response Coordinator, many of the connections are easily accomplished.

A disaster may take considerable time (years) to resolve. The local church should recognize and acknowledge its limitations in response. The District Disaster Coordinator and the conference Disaster Response Coordinator will also work with the local church to identify the church's role in long term recovery, should that be necessary in the community.

Churches in the conference do not work directly with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), a resource agency of the general church. When invited by the bishop, UMCOR provides resources and assistance to the conference through the bishop, who delegates day-to-day operations to the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.

This portion of the conference plan describing roles and responsibilities of the cluster is not intended to be the only local church plan. A detailed disaster plan covering all stages needs to be developed for each and every church. The booklet "The Local Church Disaster Planning Guide" is an excellent place to start the planning effort.

### **Stage 1: Planning and preparation — Before Disaster Strikes**

1. Working with the cluster or designated church leadership, identify a Disaster Coordinator and recruit a disaster team. A pastor should not be the local disaster team leader, though a pastor is encouraged to be an active part of the team.
2. Develop a cluster plan that is consistent with and contributes to the conference plan, including:
  - a. Caring for people
  - b. Caring for church facilities
  - c. Caring for community
  - d. Caring for others in the conference and beyond
3. Each pastor and the Board of Trustees should annually review insurance coverage.
4. Each Board of Trustees should make an annual inventory of church property and contents and provide a safe repository of valuable records.
5. Send a copy of your plan to the District Disaster Coordinator and the Conference Disaster Coordinator.
6. Make full use of resources from other disaster-related organizations, such as the local Office of Emergency Services or Police and Fire Departments, the American Red Cross, and others. First Aid and CPR training, shelter management and certification of facilities are all available from the local chapter of the American Red Cross, and should be taken advantage of prior to any disaster.
7. Encourage cluster churches to support the bishop's appeals regarding disaster relief (supplies, collections, food drives, aid to other conferences, etc.)
8. Encourage cluster churches to support the annual "One Great Hour of Sharing" offering which is UMCOR's primary source of funding for their work in disasters and other endeavors.

### **Stage 2: Warning — Disaster is Imminent**

1. Confirm communication channels and review cluster response plan.
2. Check for updates from the district and the conference web sites.
3. Set up a disaster team work area and, if the disaster is likely to have a severe adverse impact on proposed location, be prepared to identify an alternative location to work from.

### **Stage 3: Emergency Response — After Disaster Strikes**

1. Implement the cluster Disaster Plan including:
  - a. Checking on the safety of the pastors, the staff and their families;
  - b. Assessing damage to church property;
  - c. Assessing safety of members of the congregations and property damage within the congregations;
  - d. Assessing overall damage to the community served.
2. Report assessment to the DDC and/or the DS. If they are not yet functional, report findings to the conference Disaster Response Coordinator or the office of the bishop.
3. Identify someone to escort the bishop, DDC, DS, and/or other personnel on a tour of affected area should such a visit be scheduled.

### **Stage 4: Relief**

1. Determine when telephone communication capabilities have been restored.
2. Continue to implement the cluster Disaster Plan.
3. Establish the immediate needs for food and shelter to the community.
4. Ensure that where church property is damaged a claim with the insurance carrier is filed.
5. Keep strict and separate accounting of disaster funding and document all expenditures and receipts of money.
6. Concentrate on creating a safe, sanitary and secure environment by meeting the basic needs of food, water, and shelter.
7. When permitted, organize care teams to check on the most vulnerable community people and clean-up teams to go into neighborhoods.
  - a. Contact the DDC to request ERT and Care Teams when appropriate.
  - b. Report what, if any, level of support can be provided incoming disaster workers.
8. Prepare to receive work teams that may show up to help.
9. Contact other faith based operations and coordinate relief efforts.

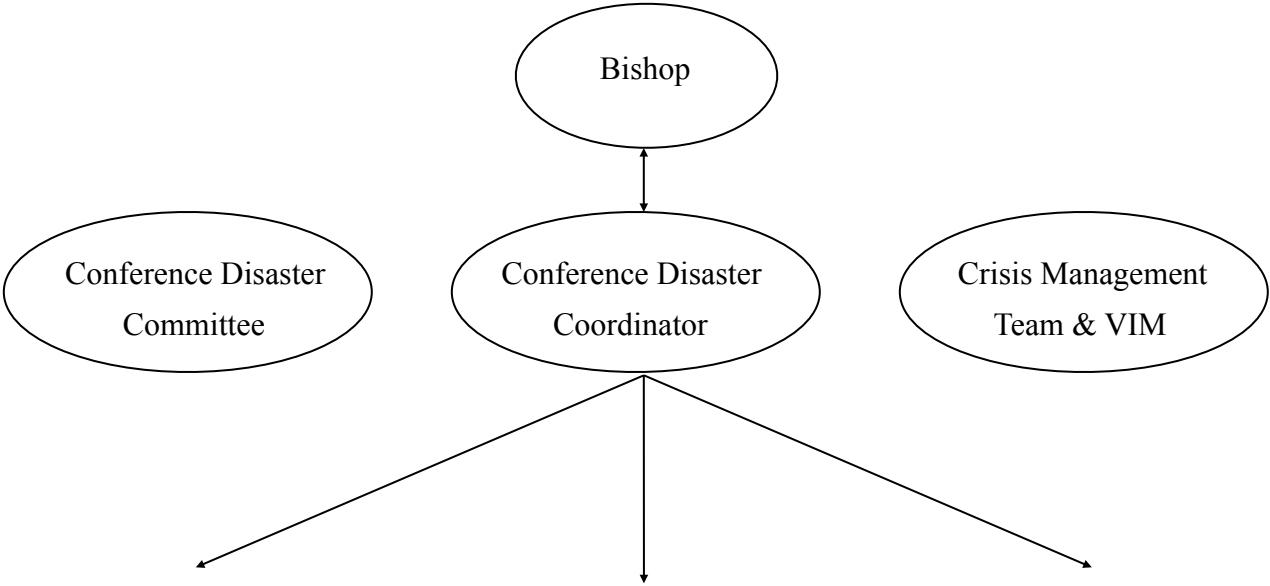
### **Stage 5: Long-Term Recovery**

1. Working with the DDC and the conference Disaster Response Coordinator, determine the level of involvement appropriate for the clusters in Long-Term Recovery.
2. Develop a procedure for referrals of people who contact the cluster churches asking for assistance.
3. Develop a procedure for managing volunteers who contact the cluster churches.
4. Develop a procedure for handling supplies offered to the cluster churches.
5. If the cluster is not in the impacted area, determine the level of involvement the cluster can make in long-term recovery by providing work teams, supplies, funds, etc.

## **Guide to Acronyms**

ARC American Red Cross  
CDC Conference Disaster Committee  
CDRC Conference Disaster Response Center  
COAD Community Organizations Active in Disaster CWS Church World Services  
DDC District Disaster Coordinator  
DDT District Disaster Team  
DS District Superintendent  
EOC Emergency Operations Center  
EOC Emergency Operations Center (state & local government) ERT Early Response Team  
FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency ICS Incident Command System  
LTRO/C Long Term Recovery Organization/Coalitions/Committees NIMS National Incident Management System NVOAD National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster  
NRP National Response Plan  
OES Office of Emergency Services (state & local government)  
SEC Spiritual and Emotional Care Team UMCOR United Methodist Committee on Relief UMVIM United Methodist Volunteers in Action VOAD Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster

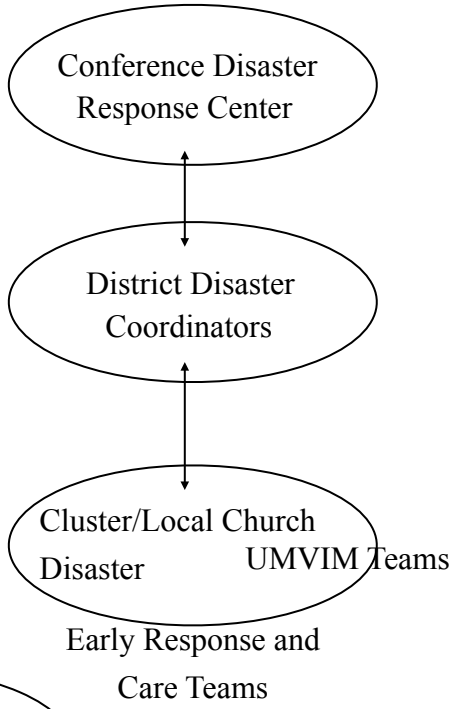
**NIC DISASTER RESPONSE  
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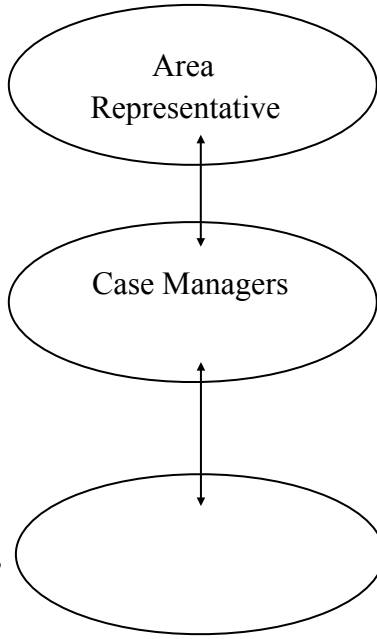




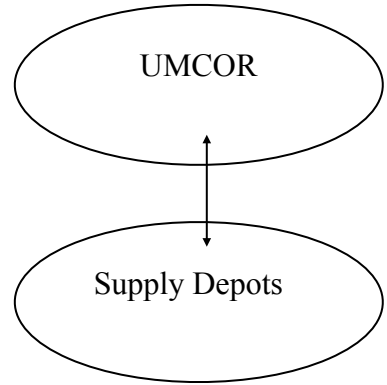
**Preparation and Relief**



**Long Term Recovery**



**Support**



**SAMPLE**  
**Conference Response Structure using NIMS/ICS**  
**Organization Structure for Large Scale Disaster**

**NOTES:**

