



# Lessons in Community Recovery

Seven Years of Emergency Support Function #14  
Long-Term Community Recovery from 2004 to 2011

December 2, 2011



FEMA

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Purpose of the Report

This report, *“Lessons in Supporting Community Recovery,”* draws on the experiences of Emergency Support Function #14 Long-Term Community Recovery (ESF #14 LTCR) to give examples and practical lessons for all audiences seeking to better prepare for disasters and to implement a “Whole Community” disaster recovery process. Public, private and nonprofit entities will find useful lessons that can be material they can apply as our country implements the National Disaster Recovery Framework. This report also documents the progression of ESF #14 LTCR support to communities over the past seven years, noting the elements of successful recovery, challenges encountered and lessons learned.

The report is organized into three sections: *Part 1: Achieving Disaster Recovery, Part 2: Recovery in Action, and Part 3: Lessons for the Future.* The key findings for each section are summarized below.

## Part 1: Achieving Disaster Recovery

The first section of this report describes the general elements of disaster recovery, based on academic research and the experience of ESF #14 LTCR and others in post-disaster communities. Communities that successfully recover from disaster events have these elements in common:

### KEYS TO SUCCESS

- **Act Quickly** – Communities take advantage of the window of opportunity post-event to assess and determine the future of the community.
- **Actively Plan** – Planning maximizes the opportunities for communities to coordinate interrelated elements of housing, infrastructure, environment and culture and promote design and policy changes for future development.
- **Engage the Community** – A successful public engagement process gives all residents in a disaster- impacted community a way to interact and provide their input on future development. It legitimizes the planning process, empowers residents and gives the community ownership of the process.
- **Develop Partnerships, Networks and Effective Coordination Strategies** – A broad and connected network of public, private and nonprofit entities is needed to support community recovery. Stakeholders should coordinate and leverage resources, capitalize on local knowledge and incorporate community needs throughout the recovery process.



Louisiana Recovery Planning Day, St. Bernard Parish

## Background

ESF #14 LTCR has worked with more than 180 communities across 23 states, two Indian tribal governments and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico since it officially became an Emergency Support Function in late 2004. Approximately 60 teams, totaling more than 600 subject matter experts, supported tribal, state and community recovery efforts. As a result, some 90 community recovery plans, strategies or documents were produced, 18 local community recovery organizations were formed, and assistance was provided to 11 states to organize for recovery.

\* The Whole Community approach is based on the recognition that it takes all aspects of a community to effectively prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against any disaster. This includes the whole spectrum of emergency management partners, such as traditional and nontraditional, including volunteer, faith, and community-based organizations; the private sector; and the public, including survivors themselves.

- **Make Decisions and Manage Recovery Locally**  
– Outside support could be needed to build capacity and support local leadership, but the community must be prepared to take ownership and management of the recovery process.
- **Mitigate** – An effective recovery will reduce risk and improve the long-term sustainability of the community. Hazard mitigation, risk reduction and sustainability choices should be integrated into the decisions on recovery policy and reinvestment.
- **Prepare for Recovery** – It is critical to establish roles and responsibilities for government and the public sector as part of pre-disaster planning. A prepared community recognizes risks, and is more resilient and capable of actions to address recovery from future disasters.

## Part 2: Recovery in Action

The *Recovery in Action* section contains brief case studies of states, tribes and local communities that received ESF#14 LTRC assistance over the past seven years, and distills the lessons learned from working in 180 communities. FEMA conducted case study research on recovery outcomes in a wide variety of communities, identifying common themes that provide insight for all audiences engaged in long-term recovery.

### RECOVERY LESSON THEMES

1. **Local Ownership and Direction** – Recovery can be successful only when it is locally driven and the community takes ownership of the process. Recovery assistance should supplement local efforts and build local capacity as needed.
2. **Create a Common Vision for Recovery** – The community must establish a clear vision for the future. The visioning process should be inclusive, reaching out to all stakeholders in the community for input. Existing community networks should be called on to connect stakeholders. This adds credibility to the process and builds existing capacity.
3. **Plan for Recovery** – The community develops and adopts planning documents to formally establish its path forward. This indicates commitment to and ownership of the recovery process.
4. **The Timeline for Recovery is Long** – Communities should expect that obtaining funding and project approvals could take several years. Timelines are shorter and success more likely with local stakeholders who are dedicated to project implementation, with local and state commitment.

### CASE STUDIES IN THIS REPORT

- **Florida (2004)**  
Escambia County: Pensacola
- **Mississippi (2005)**  
Hancock County
- **Louisiana (2005)**  
Calcasieu Parish  
Washington Parish
- **Kansas (2007)**  
Kiowa County: Greensburg
- **Iowa (2008)**  
Linn County: Palo  
Bremer County: Waverly
- **Wisconsin (2008)**  
Crawford County: Gays Mills
- **Texas (2008)**  
Galveston County: City of Galveston and Bolivar Peninsula  
Chambers County
- **Georgia (2009)**  
Cobb County: Austell and Powder Springs  
Douglas County: Lithia Springs
- **Tennessee (2010)**  
Davidson County: Nashville
- **Spirit Lake Nation (2010)**
- **Alabama (2011)**

5. **Partnerships and Organizing** – Coordinated efforts among public, private, and nonprofit partners are crucial to successful implementation of recovery plans. It is essential to connect funders with community leadership to strategize on potential projects.
6. **Leadership and Consistency are Critical to Success** – Communities benefit from a sustained and consistent management effort from their leadership. They must be able to maintain momentum and implement recovery plans that could take years to come to fruition.
7. **Role of the State Government** – States that understand the value of long-term recovery support can maximize state and federal resources in a timely manner post-disaster. State partnership and support of local communities in the LTCR process is vital to successful coordination of all levels of government. With state support to develop leadership, provide technical assistance and coordinate planning, the timeline for project implementation can be shortened.
8. **Federal Operations and Support** – Federal program expertise and resources should be applied effectively to complement state/tribal and local recovery efforts. Communities will greatly benefit from continued efforts to increase federal interagency coordination and communication through the development of the *National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF)*.

**Part 3: Lessons for the Future**

The *Lessons for the Future* section outlines key areas of focus to fully implement the *National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF)*. The NDRF incorporates and further expands upon lessons learned from ESF #14. As the NDRF is implemented and Recovery Support Functions (RSFs) are developed, ESF #14 will transition to the Community Planning Capacity Building RSF. Key lessons from ESF #14 will be addressed in this process.

The following recommendations are based on lessons learned from multiple LTCR engagements, U.S. Government Accountability Office reports and Inspector General recommended actions.

1. **Build capacity at all levels of government to successfully implement recovery concepts identified in the NDRF** – Increase stakeholder capacity by engaging in training, exercises and planning in advance for recovery support at the local, state and federal level.
2. **Prepare for recovery by developing pre-disaster plans and guidance** – Develop plans and strategies that include roles and responsibilities to more fully prepare communities to address recovery challenges.
3. **Encourage and support local ownership, leadership and management of the recovery process** – Recovery must be owned at the local level if it is to be successful. Local involvement provides continuity, fosters trust in the process and encourages stakeholder participation and investment in recovery.
4. **Foster and strengthen connectivity between all stakeholders to effectively leverage recovery resources** – A systematic method to connect local, state and federal stakeholders will ensure that resources are optimized and recovery is expedited.



Louisiana Recovery Day in Plaquemines Parish

The lessons and illustrations contained in this report were drawn from ESF #14 disaster operations between 2004 and 2010. This report was prepared mid-2011, while activities in response to the devastating tornadoes in the Southeast, as well as those for Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, were ongoing. A summary of ongoing LTRC activities, and their status at the time of publication, can be found at the end of this document. While the lessons contained in this report reference operations through 2010, they remain applicable to all current and future recovery missions.

# INTRODUCTION

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as lead agency for Emergency Support Function #14 Long-Term Community Recovery (ESF #14 LTCR), has prepared this report to provide federal, tribal, state, and local recovery partners with information and illustrations that can be used to improve recovery actions and coordination. This report documents and promotes the ability of federal agencies to support long-term community recovery by identifying lessons learned through ESF #14 LTCR. At the conclusion of this report, tribal, state and local recovery partners will better understand the ESF #14 LTCR approach to recovery and how all partners can better work together to improve the recovery process and build an integrated recovery system.

Throughout the report FEMA has documented the progression of ESF #14 LTCR concepts and assistance based on seven years of disaster experience. Examples from this report serve as a platform for jurisdictions and others to learn and benefit from these experiences. The illustrations contained in this document demonstrate the continued evolution of the federal approach to recovery and provide a guide for future actions to improve the recovery system, including the development of the *National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF)*.

### Objectives of the Report:

This report provides:

- Illustrations of community recovery practices that allow governmental jurisdictions and other recovery partners to learn and benefit from prior experience and improve recovery actions and coordination;
- Increased understanding of the federal support available for community-wide recovery;
- Lessons to shape future implementation of the NDRF.

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**PURPOSE** - This document was created to communicate lessons learned by ESF#14 LTCR for the use of recovery leaders at all levels of government and in the private sector, to improve pre-disaster planning and post-disaster recovery.

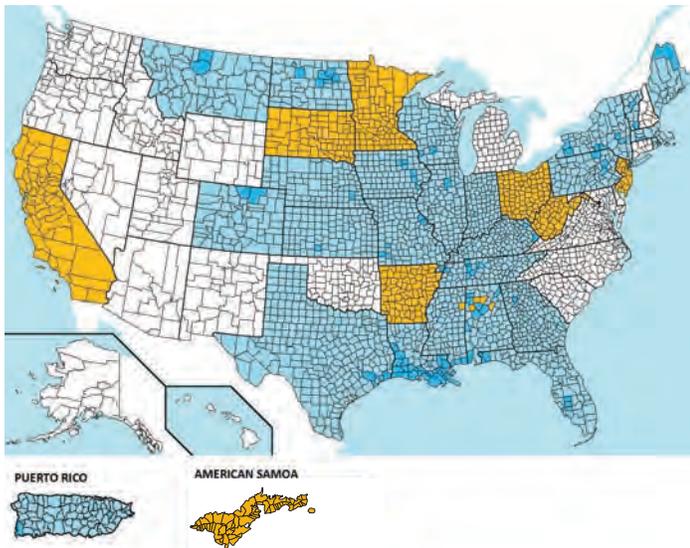
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### Structure of the Report:

The report is organized into three sections:

- The first section, *Achieving Disaster Recovery*, establishes the context for community recovery by describing the process, the role of LTCR teams, and the elements known to facilitate a successful long-term recovery.
- The second section, *Recovery in Action*, summarizes certain LTCR efforts and analyzes the common trends and lessons learned from community case studies.
- The final section, *Lessons for the Future*, translates the understanding gained from these experiences into actions and guidance that can inform future community recovery efforts under the National Disaster Recovery Framework.

Individual case studies of ESF#14 LTCR assisted communities and states discussed in this report will be made available online at the FEMA web site at [www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrc](http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrc), as they are developed.



Communities, states, tribal and territorial governments assessed (yellow) and assisted (blue) by ESF #14 LTCR

### Emergency Support Function #14 and Its Focus in this Report

ESF #14 Long-Term Community Recovery (ESF #14 LTCR) provides a structure under the *National Response Framework (NRF)* to promote successful long-term recoveries for tribes, territories, states and communities suffering extraordinary damages, where local capacity to implement a recovery process is limited. ESF #14 LTCR provides coordination and technical assistance to support federal, state and local recovery process. It is one of the 15 Emergency Support Function annexes under the NRF. More information on the NRF can be found at [www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf). The ESF #14 Annex can be found at [www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-14.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nrf/nrf-esf-14.pdf).

Specifically, ESF #14:

- Facilitates delivery of federal assistance to state, tribal, territorial and local governments which experienced unique and challenging disasters, for community-wide recovery, reconstruction and redevelopment.
- Serves as a mechanism to coordinate recovery resources among federal programs. The goals are to avoid duplication of assistance,

identify and resolve policy issues and gaps, and streamline assistance by coordinating application processes and planning requirements.

- Provides technical assistance for state, tribal and local governments in their long-term recovery decision-making. This includes planning assistance, impact assessments, and identification of key recovery priorities and resources. The LTCR planning model is described in the *LTCR Self-Help Guide* for local governments at [www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrcr/plan\\_resource.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrcr/plan_resource.shtm).

Since it officially became an Emergency Support Function, ESF #14 has worked with more than 180 communities across 23 states, two Indian tribal governments and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The map at left shows states and communities that received assistance in blue, and states where only an LTCR assessment was conducted in yellow. Approximately 60 teams, totaling more than 600 subject matter experts, supported these recovery efforts. The results include preparation of more than 90 community recovery plans, strategies or documents, formation of 18 local community recovery organizations, and assistance to 11 states to organize for recovery.

This report contains a detailed examination of selected states, tribe, and local communities affected by tornadoes, floods, and/or hurricanes. The post-disaster experiences of each community and state illustrate key lessons learned and best practices during the recovery process.

### Whole Community Disaster Recovery - A new future in disaster recovery

Survivors of a large disaster know how difficult it is to put one's life and community back together. They also discover how challenging it can be to participate in an organized process that includes the diverse views of a community. Large disasters can expose and exacerbate existing challenges while creating widespread disruption. Disasters bring destruction, tragedy and hardship, but the recovery process can create new opportunities and partnerships.

Long-Term Community Recovery has as its foundation the “Whole Community” approach. This is a new way to look at all parts of the community, involving residents and stakeholders in a holistic way to reshape their future.

Disaster recovery becomes an opportunity to develop a vision- to re-think, re-design, and re-build in new ways, with individuals, organizations, and public and private sector partners working together. This report distills “lessons learned” from seven years of Long-Term Community Recovery operations to present the elements of a successful recovery using a “Whole Community” approach.



FEMA LTRC aided Galveston County, Texas, and the residents of the island in developing the Bolivar Blueprint, a long-term community recovery plan after Hurricane Ike

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## PART 1: ACHIEVING DISASTER RECOVERY

### Defining Successful Disaster Recovery

Each community must determine, based on its own unique circumstances, what a successful disaster recovery looks like. It will be different for each community. Some communities will want to rebuild every component as it was before the disaster. Others will plan for growth or use the opportunity to consolidate or restructure projects and services. Some communities, particularly those experiencing widespread devastation, choose to re-invent themselves from the ground up.

Communities are more likely to succeed when recovery is deliberate and intentional. Decision makers and community leaders must be flexible and adaptable. There must be an agreed-upon, working definition and vision for recovery, as well as measurable goals and objectives specific to the community.

### Baseline for Recovery

Each community's vision for recovery is different, but there is a common set of expectations for the return of functional systems - a baseline for community recovery. A community could narrowly focus on a recovery that meets the baseline expectations. However, communities are more successful when they blend traditional stabilization and repair

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**“Community” or local government** - The term community is often used in this report. Community is meant to be a broad term for this collective, multi-sector, self-organizing, and generally geographically bounded system. Often ESF #14 focuses on the local government as the primary participant most likely to pull together these system parts in a disaster recovery situation. Local governments officially represent members of the community, set land use and infrastructure investment policy, utilize government grants, and shape the decisions of all other participants.

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actions with a holistic, long-range, forward-looking view of recovery. This approach addresses changed circumstances, takes advantage of opportunities and enables the community to adapt to the “new normal” of the post-disaster environment. It requires moving beyond the baseline.

### BASELINE RECOVERY

- *Economic* – The tax base has stabilized and there are jobs and services to sustain a population.
- *Infrastructure* – Water, waste water, power and other essential services are restored and reliable.
- *Transportation* – Roads, bridges and other transportation services are safe and operational and allow full access to services, work and commerce.
- *Government / Local Leadership* – Basic government functions are open and operational.

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*“Recovery is not a final, identifiable state, but evolves from decisions made over time and is achieved most readily when local organizations are free to respond to their specific circumstances.”<sup>1</sup>*

Olshansky, Robert B, “Planning after Hurricane Katrina”, Journal of the American Planning Association, 2006.

- *Housing* – There are units and locations available for people who want to rent or own according to their needs.
- *Health and Human Services* – Basic care can be accessed at a level sufficient for all community members.
- *Environmental Systems* – Repair or restoration is underway and integrated into recovery activities and considerations.
- *Mitigation* – Rebuilding reduces vulnerability to hazards and fosters resiliency in future disasters.<sup>2</sup>

### Beyond a Baseline, Toward a Vision for a New Post-Disaster Community

Recovery, in nearly every case, is about more than a return to pre-disaster conditions. The focus often shifts to the new expectations and opportunities of the post-disaster environment, defined by the community to meet its unique circumstances.



Long-Term Community Recovery Plan – Hardee County, FL

Recovery creates an opportunity not only to survive and rebuild, but also to transform and thrive as a community. Restoring basic community services is critical; without them residents and businesses cannot return. A community can take a holistic approach to looking beyond the basics, establishing a long-term vision for recovery that identifies and develops opportunities that might not be possible otherwise.

Transformative recovery uses essential elements as the starting point for creating the vision of recovery, not as the endpoint for success.

Professor Emeritus Daniel Alesch (University of Wisconsin-Green Bay) suggests that shared expectations are paramount to successful community recovery, because “the community system develops long-term viability in the post-event milieu at a level that is roughly consistent with the expectations that the residents have developed over time after the event.” Setting these expectations collectively at the outset can galvanize community support and commitment to working toward a recovery that moves beyond the baseline.

These are questions communities can consider as they work to move beyond the baseline and adapt to the post-disaster period:

- **Economic:** Has the community identified and adapted to changed economic conditions, set benchmarks for reestablishment or increase of the tax base, and worked to develop new or strengthened economic drivers?
- **Infrastructure:** Has the community taken advantage of the opportunity to modernize or strengthen systems, consolidate infrastructure, or use reconstruction to facilitate economic, housing or hazard mitigation strategies?
- **Housing:** Has permanent housing been developed in light of the new realities of the community's socio-economic conditions? Does planning for new housing support the community's vision for workforce or affordability?

### Conditions for Success

Successful community recoveries have several conditions in common. Throughout the recovery process, these approaches guide significant community decisions and local government investment.

*“... planners do not have unlimited time to plan ... citizens of the area have a post-disaster plan in mind even before the planners begin their work ... that plan is the city as it was before a disaster.”*

Robert Geipel, as cited in Schwab, Jim, et al., “Planning for Post-disaster Recovery and Reconstruction” (PAS Report 483/484, American Planning Association, 1998), 9.



Louisiana Recovery Day in Jefferson Parish

- **Act quickly** – “The window of opportunity for accomplishing post-disaster improvements is short, lasting at most for several months following the disaster.”<sup>4</sup> There can be a tendency to return to routine patterns and behaviors; people are eager to resume normal operations. New ideas must be generated and acted on quickly.
- **Actively plan** - “Planning can maximize the opportunities for coordination of land uses and infrastructure, ensure safety, and promote design to improve the quality of residents’ lives, account for the concerns of all citizens, and seek cost-effective solutions.”<sup>5</sup>
- **Engage the whole community** – Leaders and planners “need to talk to those who are going to be affected to learn what is likely to be effective or detrimental”.<sup>6</sup> Resilient communities engage and utilize their own capacity, embodied in citizenry and leaders, to spur and sustain recovery. Open communication between the community at large and the local leadership, while challenging, is vital to the recovery process. Community engagement can re-establish social networks, elicit input from marginalized and disadvantaged demographic groups, and encourage residents to focus on the future. Public engagement also allows different parts of the community to articulate their recovery needs.
- **Develop partnerships, networks and effective coordination strategies** – The large task of recovery must be undertaken by a broad network of partners to effectively leverage resources and move the community forward. For agencies and organizations partnering on recovery, support should remain focused on and driven by community needs, knowledge, and the redevelopment process. “The amount of funds and mix of sources after any particular event is not easy to predict. Setting priorities for use of limited funds is a challenge ...”<sup>7</sup> Working together ensures effective use of limited resources and leverages funding. To achieve successful partnerships, effective coordination between all stakeholders is critical.
- **Make decisions and manage recovery locally** – Local leaders and decision makers are positioned to know how best to meet their community needs following a disaster. Ultimately, local leaders are responsible for overall recovery. Making decisions and managing recovery locally create the best opportunity for success. “When people share a strong sense of community they are motivated and empowered to change problems they face, and are better able to mediate the negative effects over things which they have no control,” Chavis et al., (1990, p. 73).

- Prepare for recovery** – Communities that prepare themselves to recover quickly from disasters are better positioned to rapidly recover than those that have not prepared. Every department, entity and individual understands and prepares for their pre-disaster role. The State of Florida, in its Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning program, shows that preparation for recovery is paramount. “The aftermath of a disaster is always challenging, even if a community has planned for a worst-case scenario; however, by proactively creating a process to make smart post-disaster decisions and prepare for long-term recovery needs, the community can do more than simply react.”<sup>8</sup>



The conclusion of the LTCR technical assistance to the Spirit Lake Nation involved a large interagency meeting with the community’s recovery team members.

- Integrate hazard mitigation and sustainability** – Recovery is most effective when community hazard risks are reduced or eliminated and community sustainability is improved. Hazard mitigation, risk reduction and sustainability choices are integrated throughout recovery policy and reinvestment decisions. “What is important about planning for post-disaster hazard mitigation is that additional resources that facilitate local hazard mitigation in the aftermath of a disaster do not materialize by accident. Local governments manage to secure resources in large part because they have planned to do so”.<sup>9</sup>

### Historical Federal Involvement in Long-Term Community Recovery

The federal government augments state, tribal, territorial and local resources when their capabilities are exceeded after a major disaster. Federal recovery efforts have typically consisted of providing financial resources for disaster assistance to individuals, families and businesses, public facility reconstruction, physical recovery, and mitigation. In some situations, particularly large, multi-state or unique disasters; the federal government has provided planning and policy- based recovery and redevelopment assistance, focused on regional and community-wide recovery planning and interagency coordination.

This broad recovery assistance was provided for decades, even before the National Response Plan. The federal government conducted disaster- wide strategic assessments after some events, such as the FEMA- directed economic recovery assessments, through the Economic Development Administration, after Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina, New Jersey and Virginia. There were community planning efforts in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, FEMA’s Project Impact in the 1990s; in Stockton and Pierce City, Missouri; Utica, Illinois; and in Florida after the 2004 hurricanes. Drawing on these experiences, ESF #14 was created to promote a community-centric, coordinated, long-term approach to recovery, with a focus on organizing and leveraging federal resources and providing enhanced technical assistance to states and communities.

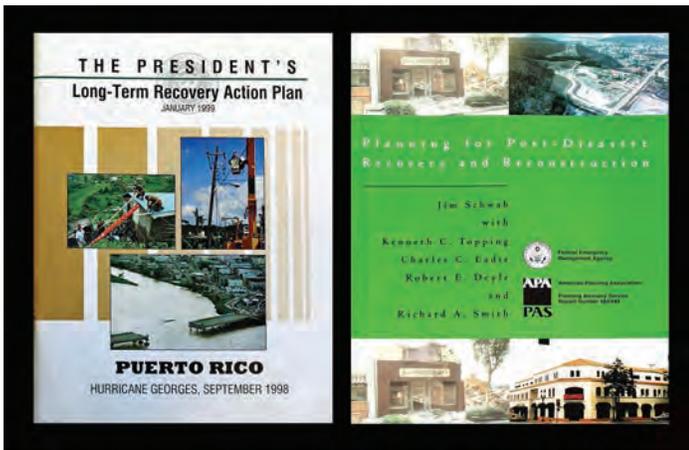
Other pre-ESF #14 community recovery examples include:

- Redevelopment of the solar village in Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin in the mid 1970s;
- The community-wide mitigation and recovery of Rapid City, South Dakota in the 1970s;
- The relocation and redevelopment of Valmeyer, Illinois, in 1994;
- A Presidential Executive



*“... post-disaster reconstruction [planning] serves to facilitate and optimize the process for deciding which mitigation techniques a community should use in each hazard prone area.”<sup>10</sup>*

Schwab, et al., “Planning for Post-disaster Recovery and Reconstruction” (PAS Report 483/484, American Planning Association, 1998), 9



Order directing interagency recovery planning and support for Princeville, North Carolina after Hurricane Floyd in 1999;

- Interagency recovery coordination after the 2001 World Trade Center Disaster;
- Presidential Long-Term Recovery Task Forces to support recovery from Hurricane Georges (1998) in Puerto Rico and the 1997 flooding of Grand Forks, North Dakota.

The concepts underpinning ESF #14 LTCR are documented in academic studies and publications spanning decades, including Claire Rubin’s often-cited 1985 study “Community Recovery from a Major Natural Disaster,” and Dr. Daniel Alesch’s book “Managing for Long-Term Community Recovery in

the Aftermath of Disaster.” FEMA partnered with the American Planning Association to create the 1998 report, “Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction,” which compiled much of the knowledge base for community recovery planning at the time. FEMA and APA are now collaborating to update and revise this important publication.

**Role of ESF #14 LTCR Support in Launching Successful Recoveries**

**Long-Term Community Recovery** – The National Response Plan (NRP) established Emergency Support Function #14 Long-Term Community Recovery (ESF #14 LTCR) in late 2004. The NRP was superseded in 2008 by the current National Response Framework (NRF), which further outlines the mission and role of ESF #14 in the ESF #14 Annex. LTCR’s first large-scale operation involved supporting the massive multistate recovery effort after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Newly formed, LTCR quickly launched a planning effort supporting more than 25 parishes and counties and three states. LTCR has continued to evolve and learn from early experiences, as documented in the ESF #14 2008 report, Road to Recovery. Six years after the launch of ESF #14’s LTCR program, its work helped catalyze the development of the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF), which, like the NRF, will govern interactions of federal, tribal, territorial, state, local, private sector and non-governmental recovery partners for all types of disasters.

ESF#14 LTCR assistance is activated for a Presidentially declared disaster at the request of a Federal Coordinating Officer in coordination with state or tribal officials. The mission is complete when all significant resources have been identified and coordinated with the impacted communities, when warranted impact analyses are completed, and when the necessary support has been provided to launch community recovery plans. LTCR will transition recovery efforts to state, tribal, territorial, federal, local and non-governmental partners, to build on LTCR efforts and continue the community recovery process after the LTCR assistance teams demobilize.

### Mission of ESF#14 LTCR

The mission of LTCR is to promote successful long-term recoveries for communities suffering extraordinary damages. It does so by working with and through the state, tribe or territory to: identify and coordinate potential sources of recovery funding; and to provide technical assistance in the form of impact analysis and recovery planning support.

LTCR assists communities as a whole, with local government as the major partner in an area-wide recovery process. This support is separate from typical assistance that focuses on the specific needs of individuals and families. Those programs are normally coordinated by non-profit and non-governmental organizations, including Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), and facilitated by local long-term recovery groups or unmet needs committees. In contrast, LTCR responds to the overall impact of the disaster, as well as the strategic conditions of the state and community government capacity prior to and following the disaster.

### Deployment History of ESF #14 LTCR

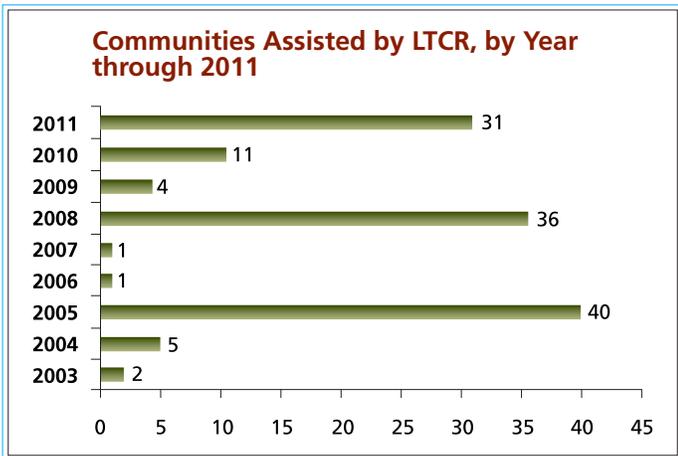
Between 2004 and 2011, approximately 60 teams, totaling more than 600 technical experts, have supported LTCR efforts in more than 180 communities across 23 states, two Indian tribal governments and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Support has ranged from comprehensive, large planning teams for heavily impacted communities to smaller, targeted planning and technical assistance teams for communities with more specific needs. The results of these efforts include nearly 90 community recovery plans, strategies or documents, approximately 18 local recovery organizations, and assistance to 11 states to organize for recovery. Immediately before ESF #14's official launch, FEMA's LTCR support



ESF #14 HHS Interagency Members at the 2008 Tennessee Joint Field Office

program provided technical assistance to four states and nine communities between 2003 and late 2004. Technical assistance teams from more than 12 federal departments and agencies have partnered in Long-Term Community Recovery, including the direct support and coordination of hundreds of federal employees. Within ESF #14, FEMA and other federal agencies have provided expertise in public involvement processes and meeting facilitation, community planning, architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, sustainability, energy efficiency, addressing disability or access/functional needs, smart growth and a variety of other programs. The level of assistance LTCR teams provided to states and communities has included convening interagency groups or workshops, strategizing community recovery issues, and managing multiple public involvement sessions to guide stakeholders through visioning and goal-setting.

The chart on page 16 summarizes the work ESF #14 completed in the last seven years, including the state, federal disaster declaration number (DR #), total number of communities assisted, type of disaster, and approximate dates of deployments. These timeframes represent the duration of the ESF #14 LTCR mission from assessment to implementation across the entire disaster. The timeframes are not community specific and do not include intermittent on-site or remote technical support after ESF #14 demobilization. In each mission, ESF #14 offered technical assistance to



\*\* Note: LTCR assistance in some communities continued intermittently in subsequent years.

the state to support organizational efforts and build capacity, in addition to providing assistance to communities.

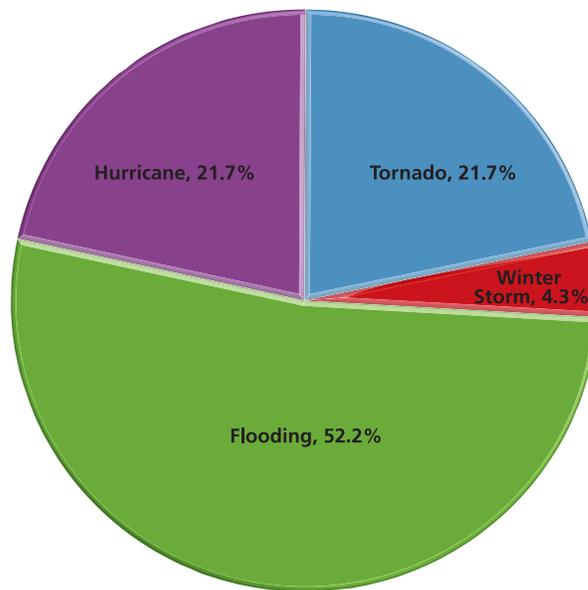
ESF #14 LTCR teams provided varying levels of service to rural and urban communities ranging in population from less than 400 to more than 600,000. The number of personnel and the duration of assistance varied based on the scale and severity of the disaster, community capacity, resources provided by the state, and the interest and support for recovery planning. In some cases, an advisor or a small team provides assistance to a specific community for three or four weeks. In the case of a large scale disaster, where a community does not have the capacity to address long-term recovery issues, a larger LTCR team may be in place for 9 to 12 weeks or longer. The unprecedented scale of Hurricane Katrina led to high levels of LTCR staffing; more than 300 technical assistance consultants were deployed to assist impacted Louisiana parishes to develop LTCR plans.

The majority of geographic areas assisted by LTCR teams were damaged by severe flooding (see pie chart, "Disaster types supported by LTCR"). LTCR teams also have assisted communities recovering from devastating tornadoes, large scale outbreaks, and severe hurricanes.

The chart to the left shows the number of communities receiving LTCR assistance each year between 2004 and 2011. In some cases, after the initial assistance period, workshops or coordination meetings took place in subsequent years. In post-Katrina Louisiana, after the initial large scale deployment, a smaller team of planners remained to assist in implementation strategies for highly impacted parishes. The timeframes do not include separate transitional recovery offices that provide similar long-term interagency resource coordination and facilitation, but are a separate and distinct function from ESF #14 support.

**LTCR Support Model**

ESF #14 LTCR assistance is designed to respond to overall disaster impact, taking into account the conditions and capacity of the community both before and after the disaster. The state will take the lead in identifying communities, targeting technical assistance, and deciding whether or not to use ESF #14 assistance at all. LTCR assistance is tailored to state and community needs, but there are core processes and models which are applicable across the board.



Disaster types supported by LTCR through 2011

## LESSONS IN COMMUNITY RECOVERY

Seven Years of Emergency Support Function #14 Long-Term Community Recovery from 2004 to 2011

STATE	DR #	# OF COMMUNITIES ASSISTED	DISASTER TYPE	APPROXIMATE TIMEFRAME OF ESF #14 ACTIVITY
Missouri	1463	2	Tornado	June 2003 – August 2003
Illinois	1513	1	Tornado	May 2004 – July 2004
Nebraska	1517	1	Tornado	August 2004 – January 2005
Florida (2004)	1539	3	Hurricane	September 2004 – December 2004
Florida (2005)	1551	2	Hurricane	January 2005 – March 2005
Louisiana	1603	27	Hurricane	September 2005 – March 2006
Mississippi	1604	11	Hurricane	November 2005 – June 2006
Alabama	1605	1	Hurricane	October 2005 – June 2006
Missouri	1631	1	Tornado	May 2006 – July 2006
Kansas	1699	1	Tornado	May 2007 – August 2007
Tennessee	1745	1	Tornado	February 2008
Maine	1755	1	Severe storms/Flooding	May 2008 – January 2010
Colorado	1762	1	Tornado	May 2008 – June 2008
Iowa	1763	10	Flooding/Tornado	June 2008 – May 2009
Indiana	1766	4	Flooding	June 2008 – August 2008
Wisconsin	1768	2	Flooding	June 2008 – October 2008
Illinois	1771	1	Flooding	June 2008 – July 2008
Missouri	1773	3	Flooding	February 2009 – May 2009
Texas	1791	7	Hurricane	September 2008 – May 2009
Puerto Rico	1798	2	Flooding	October 2008
New York	1857	2	Severe storms/Flooding	September 2009 – December 2009
Georgia	1858	2	Flooding	October 2009 – February 2010
Rhode Island	1894	State-wide	Flooding	April 2010 – June 2010
Spirit Lake Nation – North Dakota	1907	1	Flooding	July 2010 – December 2010
Tennessee	1909	8	Flooding	May 2010 – February 2011
Rocky Boys Reservation – Montana	1922	1	Flooding	July 2010 – October 2010
Kentucky	1925	1	Flooding	August 2010 – February 2011
Alabama	1971	11	Tornados	May 2011 – November 2011
Mississippi	1972	1	Tornados	May 2011 – August 2011
Tennessee	1974/1979	1	Tornados/Flooding	May 2011 – August 2011
Missouri	1980	2	Tornados	May 2011 – November 2011
North Dakota	1981	3	Flooding	July 2011 – Ongoing
Massachusetts	1994	1	Tornado	June 2011 – September 2011
Vermont	4022	3	Tropical storm	September 2011 – Ongoing
New York	4020/4031	5	Hurricane/Tropical storm	September 2011 – Ongoing
Pennsylvania	4025/4030	4	Hurricane/Tropical storm	September 2011 - Ongoing

+ Community assessments were conducted at the county or parish level wherever possible, however, technical assistance to communities in this chart also includes individual jurisdictions, such as cities or towns receiving assistance.

LTCR helps identify and maximize as many opportunities as possible, creating partnerships to sustain recovery efforts. LTCR assistance most frequently takes the form of coordination support and technical assistance.

#### COORDINATION SUPPORT – BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS, STRATEGIC PROBLEM SOLVING, AND IMPROVING RESOURCE ACCESS

A critical step in recovery is to identify all potential partners. This includes local, state, tribal and federal entities, nonprofits and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and individual community members and leaders. LTCR can facilitate the organization and coordination of recovery partners and stakeholders. This will take place at a disaster-wide level among federal, state, tribal and territorial agencies, and at the community level to identify recovery needs and opportunities for collaboration and support. Coordination can occur by community sector, as in the case of Texas following Hurricane Ike (2008), or as a larger collective that focuses on specific topics as needed, as in the case of the Iowa Inter-Agency Coordination Team (IACT) following tornadoes and flooding in the spring of 2008.

After the recovery coordination structure is established with federal and state, tribal or territorial governments, the process begins to determine how best to support impacted communities. It is critical to clearly define the desired outcome and establish a mission, purpose or goal. This will maintain interest and momentum among the recovery partners. The state government role in setting these outcomes or objectives is significant. Building these partnerships among government, nonprofits and the private sector can result in benefits that extend beyond the impacts of the disaster.

LTCR's first step is to identify the mission, purpose and intended outcome of the process. Focused discussions provide a starting point for identifying stakeholders, key issues, gaps, limitations and needs. With a large number of stakeholders, there could be a need for more than one organization focused on recovery. In that case, the groups must coordinate



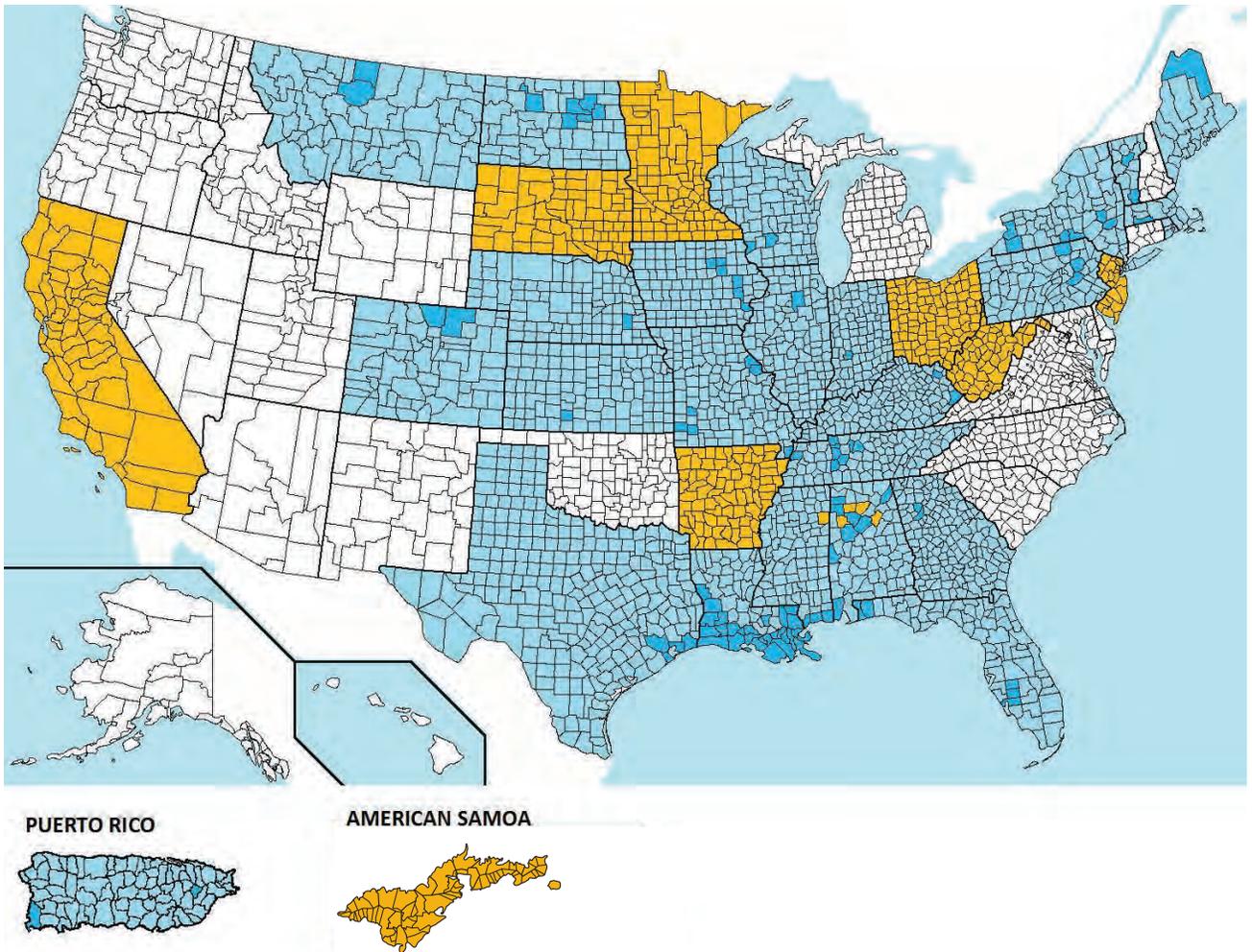
Greensburg, Kansas LTCR Meeting

and collaborate, or opportunity and productivity is lost. It is critical for the state government to take an active leadership role in convening a collaborative coordination effort. LTCR normally works with the state, tribal or territorial government to develop a joint coordination structure to support and manage recovery, actively engage with federal partners and leverage funding and technical assistance resources. This helps to avoid duplication of efforts.

#### COORDINATION RESULTS – THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES ILLUSTRATE THE WAYS COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORTED BY LTCR HAVE LED TO NEW AND CREATIVE RECOVERY ACTIVITIES:

- Spirit Lake Nation** – The Spirit Lake Nation (SLN), located in North Dakota, has seen nearly 17 years of progressive flooding of Devils Lake. After developing a plan for addressing the flood impacts, the SLN, with support from LTCR, invited federal and state agencies to a day-long workshop to discuss how they could collaborate on recovery projects. As a result, federal partners and tribal working groups set up program assistance including: a Smart Growth Workshop from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a

States and Communities Assisted by ESF #14 LTRC through 2011



Light Blue = Assessments conducted within the state, community specific and state support provided.  
 Dark Blue = Local governments provided LTRC technical assistance.  
 Yellow = Assessments conducted within the state, no community specific support provided.

recovery manager position funded by the U.S. Commerce Department’s Economic Development Administration (EDA), training in grant writing from the Agency for Native Americans (ANA), and funding for projects in excess of \$9 million.

- **Florida** – Following the severe 2004 hurricane season, severely impacted communities developed recovery plans to guide their recovery, with support from the State and FEMA. Then a series of workshops was held

for funding agencies to learn about recovery projects and strategize about how to leverage funding. Once projects were underway, federal and state partners held regular conference calls to discuss potential application of resources.

- **Greensburg, Kansas** – In May 2007 an EF-5 tornado more than mile wide cut through the central Kansas community of Greensburg, destroying more than 90 percent of the structures and devastating residents.

**LONG-TERM COMMUNITY RECOVERY (LTCR):**

- Assists in the coordination of federal long-term recovery resources;
- Promotes recovery efforts by establishing a recovery coordination and planning structure, for and among federal, tribal, state and local levels;
- Is used when capacity for recovery has been compromised due to the disaster magnitude, complexity;
- Supports states with a process for coordination and planning for recovery; and
- Is tailored to community needs and focuses on providing technical assistance and connecting resources needs.

LTCR brought federal partners to the table to implement the community’s identified recovery projects. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that as of 2008 it provided technical assistance in renewable energy and energy efficient building design valued at up to \$1.25 million. The EDA invested \$2.3 million to help rebuild Main Street, creating 30 jobs, generating \$3 million in private investment, and revitalizing the downtown area.<sup>11</sup> By working together, resources can be leveraged to enhance investments in a targeted area.

- **Georgia** – When flooding impacted Austell (Cobb County) and Powder Springs (Douglas County) in northwest Georgia in 2009, LTCR worked with the community to build partnerships that led to the creation of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jacket program within the state.<sup>12</sup> This set the stage to provide assistance beyond the disaster and these communities, to benefit the entire state. It is now available to support communities post-disaster as well as to identify everyday partnership opportunities.

These coordination efforts produced stronger partnerships, creative application of resources, and increased capacity.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT – PLANNING FOR RECOVERY**

Technical assistance provided for recovery planning by LTCR is also tailored to the unique conditions, disaster impacts, and needs of the community. LTCR provides support to varying degrees and in various forms for one or more of the elements in the recovery planning process identified in the figure on the following page.<sup>13</sup>

LTCR support could include:

- Providing advisors and subject matter experts for consultation,
- Facilitating key community leadership meetings,
- Advising on public engagement, and
- Providing full planning teams to work on-site within the community to help facilitate all steps in the process.

The level of support is based on the community capacity, state and other resources, and a desire and commitment to partner in these recovery efforts.

In communities with extensive impacts to multiple locations and sectors, the complete recovery planning process will likely take considerable time and effort. If a community has more easily quantifiable needs or a more limited scope, the process will be completed more quickly. In either case, LTCR will respond to the community’s capacity, helping to develop a coherent strategy in a timely manner, engaging the public and building partnerships to create an environment for successful recovery. Taking the time to move through the process allows the community to make the most of the opportunities created by the recovery process.

LTCR is not present for the entire recovery. ESF #14 provides assistance to plan and launch recovery strategies, then transitions to other federal, state, tribal, territorial and non-governmental partners. The community can continue forward in recovery with support from new partners and an active and engaged community and state government. Part

## LTCR PLANNING PROCESS: STEPS ON THE PATH TO RECOVERY

### Assess the Need

Determine what the impacts of the disaster were and what the capacity is post-disaster

### Identify Leadership

Establish clear leadership or leaders for the process

### Secure Support

Build partnerships to enable recovery to be successful

### Solicit Input

Engage the community in all activities to ensure participation in the process and recovery

### Reach Consensus

Find some common ground to move the process forward; determine the path forward for the process

### Identify Issues

What challenges to recovery does the community express? What are the community needs?

### Develop Vision and Goals

Where does the community want to be at the end of the recovery process?

### Evaluate and Prioritize Actions

Identify actions that create greatest impact on recovery; determine how actions will impact community needs

### Document a Plan

Establish a strategy to ensure common action and direction

### Identify Project Leaders

Determine who is responsible for next steps and actions to implement

### Identify and Seek Funding

Work with partners to move projects from concept to action

### Implement Strategy

Carry out identified actions for recovery; manage the overall complex ongoing recovery process

### Update Strategy

Revise and modify as new information and opportunities become available

of the LTCR mission is to bring in partners at the beginning of the process who can take the projects forward after the LTCR engagement is over.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESULTS – THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES ILLUSTRATE THE WAYS LTCR HAS TAILORED THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE APPROACH TO BEST SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY:

- **Montana** – After an early summer flood destroyed a medical center, three LTCR planners worked with the Chippewa Cree Tribe, Rocky Boys Reservation leadership to develop a long-term plan for development and land use in a new community center area.
- **Iowa** – Following the 2008 Iowa floods, LTCR partnered with the state’s Rebuild Iowa Office, providing planning support in 10 communities. Support ranged from a single technical specialist to teams of up to eight specialists and planners assisting with the development of recovery plans and strategies.
- **Bolivar Peninsula, Texas** – A small team of six provided support to the Bolivar Blueprint steering committee as it developed an organization and created the “Bolivar Blueprint” for recovery. Two specialists stayed on for six months to help the committee build the capacity to manage the recovery process and implement the steps in the Blueprint. This technical assistance targeted the unique needs and capacity challenges of the unincorporated Bolivar Peninsula. The planning process helped leverage and integrate into the largest buyout of flood-prone property in Texas history under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.
- **Louisiana** – Following Hurricane Katrina, LTCR provided technical assistance in partnership with the State of Louisiana. More than 300 technical specialists supported the creation of 20 recovery plans across Louisiana, resulting in 19 long-term community recovery workshops, 46 open house events, the Louisiana Speaks nation-wide outreach, and Louisiana Planning Day, which offered more than 80 percent of displaced residents the opportunity to participate the planning efforts.<sup>14</sup> This massive

effort was done in partnership with both public and private sectors to make the best use of available resources.

- **Gays Mills, Wisconsin** – A team averaging eight technical specialists and planners worked closely in support of the community by organizing meetings, open houses and

individual conversations to support the town in the development of their recovery plan. This high level of engagement and partnership with Gays Mills resulted from their desire to look at all possible community-wide recovery options.

*As a result of the LTCR process with which ESF #14 assisted the community and state during 2008, the community has been successfully moving ahead with the implementation of their plan to create a new and expanded Gays Mills in a safer location. Construction is well underway on LTCR related projects funded by several federal and state partners that address important housing, business, and infrastructure issues.*



In the past two years, Gays Mills has made great progress implementing their Recovery Plan. An Economic and Recovery Coordinator funded with a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has been able to coordinate relocation funding from multiple agencies, estimated at \$18 million. The agencies involved include FEMA, the Economic Development Administration, USDA Rural Development, HUD Community Development Block Grants and the Department of Transportation. Additional State and private investment also contributed to the community's recovery.



Two relocation sites that were identified during the LTCR planning process were purchased to house Gays Mills residents in mixed-use developments. Construction methods are emphasizing sustainability. One site includes residential homes and townhouses, a mercantile center and a community center. The second site will include a health clinic, assisted living facility, the Fire Department, and additional business development.

**ESF #14 PROVIDES A TARGETED ASSISTANCE TEAM TO SUPPORT THE CITY OF CEDAR RAPIDS**

Following the 2008 floods in Iowa, a small LTRC team supported the State of Iowa and the City of Cedar Rapids by providing a technical assistance specialist and back office support, to assist and offer technical advice, unbiased meeting facilitation and coordination support to those working on recovery efforts. This improved the City's access to a wide range of interagency recovery resources and augmented the substantial existing expertise and planning capacity within the community.



One element of the conceptual land use concept from the Chippewa Cree Long-Term Community Recovery plan



Galveston County Commission Patrick Doyle (right) discusses recovery ideas with community leaders at an LTRC recovery workshop on Bolivar Peninsula

# PART 2: RECOVERY IN ACTION

This chapter provides an overview of selected ESF #14 deployments and a snapshot of LTCR operations and activities during those deployments. These examples have been selected for diversity of experiences and as representative of overall ESF #14 work and principles.

The second half of this chapter, *Lessons Learned in Community Recovery*, summarizes what was learned from these community recovery experiences. These are shared to identify ways to more successfully achieve disaster recovery, both for LTCR operations and federal, state, and local partners.

A full listing of ESF #14 deployments is provided in Part I of this report. Operational summaries for deployments are also being prepared separately, and when available they will be posted to FEMA's website at [www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrc](http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/ltrc).

### Long-Term Community Recovery Support Snapshots

To more fully understand the role of LTCR assistance in the recovery process, FEMA conducted case study research on recovery outcomes in a wide variety of communities: rural and urban communities; those affected by floods, tornadoes, fires, and hurricanes; and those that were thriving before the disaster, and



Residents reviewing the Charlotte County LTCR Plan

those that were already struggling. Snapshot case studies include: Florida hurricanes (2004), Mississippi and Louisiana hurricanes (2005), Greensburg tornado (2007), Midwest floods and Hurricane Ike (2008), Georgia floods (2009), Spirit Lake Nation floods in North Dakota (2010) and the Alabama tornadoes (2011). Files were examined, documents reviewed, and interviews conducted with ESF #14 staff as well as federal, state and local government participants. Common themes were identified in these case studies that provide lessons for long-term recovery. In order to provide the context for the analysis and findings, this section provides a short summary of selected disasters.

### 2004 FLORIDA HURRICANES

In 2004 tropical storm Bonnie and hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne all struck Florida in the six weeks between mid-August and the end of September. The state suffered severe impacts and hurricane fatigue. The number and magnitude of this many disasters in such a short timeframe overwhelmed local jurisdictions. To supplement limited capacity at the state and local level, LTCR provided support to the Florida Department of Community Affairs to assist the most heavily impacted communities in developing plans to launch their recovery. LTCR teams deployed to five counties to assist with recovery and were



Galveston community recovery committee

introduced to local leadership by the state, *helping to establish the credibility of the LTCR process (p.62)*. The State of Florida’s involvement in the LTCR program also aided in the development of the current Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning initiative in coastal counties.<sup>15</sup>

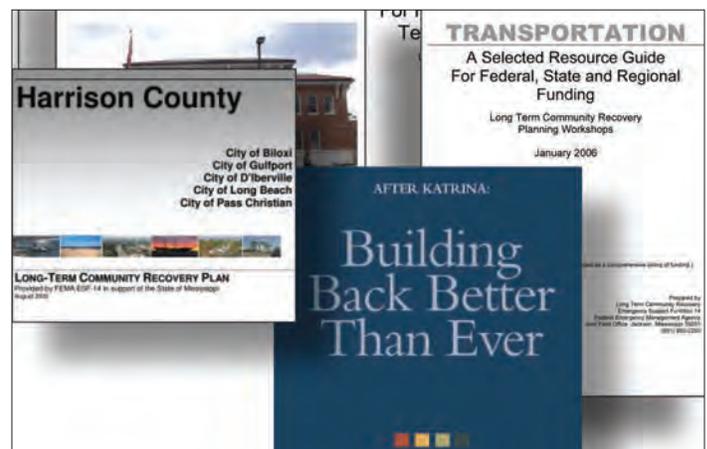
**City of Pensacola, Escambia County**

Hurricane Ivan made landfall as a Category 3 hurricane in September 2004, 40 miles west of Pensacola. One hundred mile per hour (mph) winds and a storm surge of 15 feet caused several deaths, destroyed infrastructure, and leveled dunes along barrier islands. Nearly half the county’s housing stock was damaged or destroyed. Tourism income, the largest significant source of revenue, was reduced to three quarters of its projected level.<sup>16</sup> City of Pensacola residents and county-level leaders in Escambia County began organizing themselves to support rebuilding and recovery, *building momentum and taking ownership of the recovery process before the state or LTCR teams hit the scene (p. 51)*. Once the LTCR team was deployed, they were able to support an existing framework due to the strong leadership and proactiveness of the community.

With LTCR support to facilitate the community involvement process, the city and county established a broad-based community structure to support recovery planning and project implementation, *reinvigorating community involvement and collaboration (p. 55)*. The ESF#14 LTCR team guided the community to develop a vision, goals and projects, helped the community evaluate projects and assisted in development of the final LTCR plan. The county recognized the value of the LTCR process and saw it as an *opportunity both to come up with new ideas and to build upon and update the existing comprehensive plan (p. 49)*.

County officials felt that the LTCR team’s transition out of the community was premature. (The timing of the transition was a result of multiple disasters and limited LTCR team resources to serve all of the communities in need.) This experience shows that technical support teams should have a plan for a

gradual and deliberate transition out of the community (p. 58). The Escambia County Long-Term Recovery Plan<sup>17</sup> identified six areas of focus and more than 30 recovery projects. Six years later, most Pensacola officials interviewed felt they were still in the middle of their recovery process: 12 of 37 recovery projects are complete, 13 are on-going, 2 are still planned, and the community continues its transition from an industrial economy to a tourism and retirement-based community.



Materials created for Mississippi recovery

**2005 HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA-MISSISSIPPI**

Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, LTCR teams were deployed to Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. In Mississippi, four LTCR teams, comprised of 68 professionals, arrived in November at the request of Governor Haley Barbour to work in four counties, including Hancock County. *The State built the credibility of the LTCR process by introducing the teams to local officials (p. 62)*. ESF #14 LTCR support concluded in March 2006. A small LTCR implementation support team continued to work with the counties under the auspice of the FEMA Transitional Recovery Offices until March 2010.

### **Hancock County, Mississippi**

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina ripped across the Mississippi coast, hitting Hancock County with 140 mph winds, a 35-foot storm surge and devastating wave action. It left 56 people dead, buildings and roads destroyed, and 47 percent of housing uninhabitable. In response to the storm, Governor Haley Barbour established a Commission for Recovery and Renewal, which launched a series of community planning charettes\* across the state. These charettes brought residents together and catalyzed interest and commitment to plan for the long term. LTCR then partnered with the state's newly established Governor's Office for Recovery and Renewal to deliver technical assistance. This included: helping assess recovery needs; articulating a recovery vision and setting goals in the four heavily impacted coastal counties; identifying, evaluating and prioritizing LTCR issues and projects; developing an LTCR plan<sup>18</sup>, and a funding strategy; securing outside support; and identifying local champions for recovery projects.

The recovery planning phase, supported by ESF #14, concluded in March 2006. The LTCR operation transitioned into a separate subcomponent of the FEMA Transitional Recovery Office and continued to support Hancock County with the implementation of the recovery through March 2010, making this the longest LTCR mission thus far. Building ***strong local capacity and capability is critical to a successful long-term recovery effort (p. 41).***

Today, Hancock County believes it is past the midpoint of their recovery. The County completed two of its 27 recovery projects, with 20 still ongoing, one still planned, and two dropped for various reasons. The planned projects have all been funded. Although Hancock County initially experienced a population decline of more than 24 percent<sup>19</sup> in the months following the disaster, 2010 Census data shows an increase in the population by more than 2 percent from 2000 statistics.<sup>20</sup> The people, organizations, and agencies of Hancock County continue to push forward with recovery.



LTCR Storefront - Calcasieu Parish, LA

The Hancock County Chamber of Commerce was pivotal in the recovery process, serving as a hub for non-profits, the private sector and other interested recovery partners. The coordination role of the Chamber of Commerce illustrates ***the importance of having a recovery structure for cooperation among recovery partners (p. 53).***

### **2005 HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA - LOUISIANA**

ESF #14 deployed at the request of the State of Louisiana in September 2005. In October, 300 planners and technical specialists arrived to assist 25 parishes with launching LTCR processes and plans. State government was key in ***establishing the credibility of the LTCR process with local communities (p. 62).*** LTCR teams worked with the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) to implement the Louisiana Speaks initiative, a state-wide planning day including nine out-of-state locations for displaced Louisiana residents to participate in recovery planning.<sup>21</sup> ESF #14 also provided support to the State of Louisiana in the development of the LRA, and partnered with the LRA on many innovative recovery support initiatives. This includes the creation of Strategic Recovery Timelines to assist sequencing activities, the Parish Recovery Planning Tool, a website that provided web access to all recovery projects, plans, and contact information for public and private partnership opportunities. This continues to operate today at [www.louisianaspeaks-parishplans.org](http://www.louisianaspeaks-parishplans.org). The LTCR teams concluded their support in March 2006 after the initial recovery planning was complete, at the request of disaster leadership. ***Communities***

\*A charette (shu-ret') brings together a group of people who are led through a short, focused study to intensively brainstorm possibilities and create visual designs of the ideas they generate. (source: <http://www.metroparkstacoma.org/page.php?id=484>)

*had only a few weeks' notice of the LTCR team departure; this made it difficult to provide communities with the training and capacity building needed to use the recovery tools and plans they had developed (p. 58).* The LRA and the Recovery Support Branch of the Transitional Recovery Office provided targeted support to the parishes after the LTCR teams departed.<sup>22</sup>

### **Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana**

Hurricane Rita slammed ashore in Calcasieu Parish on September 23, 2005, only weeks after the Gulf Coast suffered the onslaught of Hurricane Katrina. The wind velocity and water incursion damaged or destroyed more than 60 percent of homes, caused the extensive loss of agricultural land and trees, and led to a prolonged power loss and widespread shutdown of sewer and water service facilities. In November 2005, the LRA, in partnership with the LTCR team, hosted an introductory meeting in Jennings for about 35 local government officials and community leaders to explain the assistance available for long-term recovery, and ascertain the status and capacity of the parishes. Calcasieu Parish and the City of Lake Charles had capacity, with an existing Planning Department and Commission, enabling them to capitalize on the assistance offered by the LTCR team. The recovery partnership among the LRA, Parish, and LTCR team led to a series of community meetings where residents could develop a vision and identify priorities for the recovery process. Public input informed the development of a Parish-wide LTCR plan.<sup>23</sup> The recovery projects fell within seven focus areas, with a total of 38 recovery projects.

Overall, about 55 percent of the 38 recovery projects are either in process or complete, including the *creation of a Comprehensive Plan (p. 50)*. The *recovery plan was not officially adopted* by Parish officials. *The community has remained engaged in developing a vision for the future with the Calcasieu 2030 planning process (p. 49)*. Project champions emerged who continue to move key projects forward.



Planners and residents develop ideas at a Calcasieu Parish recovery workshop after Katrina

Several flood protection and environmental recovery projects tied to state-wide environmental plans are proceeding, but at a pace outside of the Parish's control. Some are on hold until additional funding is available. Other priority projects which had not yet been implemented were completed after the 2008 hurricanes. For example, the Calcasieu Parish Volunteer Center, which was a recovery project after Hurricane Rita, had not been implemented. In the wake of Hurricane Ike, the Parish used HUD Disaster Community Development Block Grant funding to turn an existing structure into a volunteer housing center. Municipal, state, and federal funds have been leveraged for recovery projects, in part because of the *coordination and partnerships from early collaborative efforts (p. 54)*. The Parish purchased an 11-story building to house the Office of Emergency Preparedness, critical legal documents for the District Attorney, and a Coast Guard substation. Recovery funds from Hurricanes Gustav and Ike were used to retrofit the roof and install impact resistant film on the windows. This project was initially identified during the LTCR project evaluation process following Hurricane Rita.

### **Washington Parish, Louisiana**

Hurricane Katrina spun into Washington Parish with winds lasting eight hours and peak gusts of over 127 mph. The pine forests in Washington Parish which had supported the timber and paper



Louisiana recovery planning meeting

mill industry for years suffered 60 percent damage. Homes, businesses, roads and communications infrastructure were badly damaged. After the LTCR team assessment, a local office was established in the parish seat of Franklinton, in collaboration with LRA and the community. It became the gathering point for community recovery discussions and resources.

The LTCR team actively assisted the Parish in engaging community members in the long-term recovery planning process. After meeting with stakeholders from across the Parish, the Washington Parish Task Force was established, with representatives from all the municipalities as well as non-profits, faith-based groups, private sector, and law enforcement agencies. From this effort, 14 key recovery projects were identified. Nine of the 14 projects are in progress or completed; with the remaining projects awaiting sources of funding.

Most recovery projects were not eligible for the largest source of funding – the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant. Instead, FEMA funds, state appropriations, parish funds, grants and donations have funded many of these recovery projects.

The Washington Parish Task Force transitioned from a planning group facilitating the LTCR process to a “helping hands” committee focusing on individual needs. The Parish as a whole increased its focus on land use planning, and strengthened ties with neighboring parishes through the I-12 Alliance ([www.i12alliance.com](http://www.i12alliance.com)). The LTCR effort led to the Parish establishing a nine-member planning commission to administer a new land use ordinance.

This illustrates that *LTCR planning is an important early step* to establish agreement on future planning efforts (p. 49). Today, while not all the projects envisioned after Hurricane Katrina have come to fruition, the Parish infrastructure is largely restored and the partnerships continue to help the Parish pursue funding and technical assistance to complete important recovery projects.



Greensburg Recovery Planning

### 2007 GREENSBURG + KIOWA COUNTY, KANSAS, TORNADO

On May 4, 2007, an EF-5 tornado struck the City of Greensburg and Kiowa County, Kansas, resulting in widespread damage and destruction. Ninety-five percent of the city was destroyed, with the remaining five percent severely damaged by winds of up to 205 mph.

In response, FEMA activated ESF #14 LTCR, which worked with the State of Kansas, as well as local and federal partners to deliver comprehensive recovery technical assistance to Kiowa County.

LTCR provided resource coordination and recovery planning services in partnership with the state's Kansas Communities LLC<sup>24</sup> Public Square<sup>25</sup> process, to communicate and facilitate community involvement in the recovery planning effort. Governor Sebelius appointed a State Recovery Liaison to organize Cabinet-level resources and activities to better deliver integrated state assistance to all impacted communities. The planning process, supported by Kansas Communities LLC and the LTCR team, served two purposes: assisting the community in developing a recovery strategy that would serve as a guide to decisions related to the community vision and goals; and empowering local leaders to continue collaboration and communication in recovery and redevelopment. This engagement and ownership



LTCR Recovery Workshop in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

extended to all members of the community, from students to seniors. The level of participation showed the *community's trust in the recovery process, an important indicator of ownership and continued momentum of the LTCR process* after recovery support personnel depart (p. 46). Throughout the LTCR process, both *established and new leadership emerged to engage and facilitate the long-term recovery process and move recovery forward* (p. 57).

The plan contained more than 40 projects intended to jump-start recovery and bring these partners together. Since adopting the plan, fourteen projects are completed and 16 are in progress. Funding has been requested to establish a Community Housing Development Organization, to move forward on housing recovery projects. This progress is the result of strong local commitment and *making strategic use of limited recovery dollars* in projects like the Kiowa County Commons and rebuilding the water tower. In the case of the water tower, organized *coordination among federal resources made it possible to leverage funding for the greatest impact* (p.49).

LTCR team members continued to work with the community after the plan was completed, providing supplemental support as the first projects were undertaken. *Greensburg's leaders continued the momentum, maintaining recovery partnerships* and using the Public Square process to hold workshops and implement projects. Greensburg and Kiowa



Iowa Community Recovery Planning

County saw a large influx of resources and technical assistance from the private and public sector, nonprofit organizations and individuals in the years following the disaster. These resources helped to **build local capacity and capability, which is pivotal to a successful recovery (p.41)**. The community's embrace of sustainability principles helped secure investments from corporations such as SunChips<sup>26</sup> to help fund a business incubator.

### 2008 MIDWEST FLOODS - IOWA

From May to August 2008, flooding and tornadoes ravaged the state. In June 2008 Governor Chet Culver established the Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) by Executive Order, and established the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission. Nine state task forces focused on different aspects of recovery and the formation of a coordination council. The state requested LTCR assistance from the Federal Coordinating Officer for the events before RIO was established; once operational, RIO and LTCR staff jointly assessed the recovery needs on the ground and determined that 10 communities would benefit from LTCR support. **The State of Iowa was a strong partner and helped establish the credibility of the LTCR process in disaster affected communities (p.62)**. FEMA assisted RIO in establishing an LTCR program and through federal grant funds from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). With the grant, RIO deployed liaisons to the areas affected by the disasters. Liaisons were stationed in the most heavily impacted

areas, embedded with the FEMA LTCR team. With support from the LTCR teams, 10 Iowa communities developed recovery strategies and action plans to guide and push forward their recovery (See the RIO website at [www.rio.iowa.gov/community\\_recovery](http://www.rio.iowa.gov/community_recovery)). LTCR teams, in conjunction with RIO, established an Inter-Agency Coordination Team (IACT) to provide a venue for state, federal, private sector, and non-governmental organizations to share information, coordinate, and problem solve.

The LTCR teams concluded intensive technical assistance in December 2008. They established an effective transition to the state with a series of workshops in February 2009. The workshops introduced an LTCR Tool Kit for communities to use as they continue to develop and implement their recovery strategies. Tools included the Communications Mapping Tool, Decision Making Tool, Project and Program Development Guide and a Resource Guide.

In early 2009, FEMA entered an agreement with EPA to use the agency's Smart Growth expertise and provide targeted technical assistance to six communities that were still struggling with significant redevelopment and land use challenges exposed by the disaster and the LTCR process. The FEMA Regional Office continues to provide technical assistance on an as-needed basis.

#### **City of Palo, Linn County, Iowa**

In June 2008, the west branch of the Cedar River and its tributaries flooded the City of Palo, submerging 95 percent of the community. All Palo residents evacuated, the sewage system failed, and 424 structures sustained moderate to significant damage, including all businesses and municipal infrastructure. Only 10 homes were spared damage. In late August, an LTCR team of five professionals with backgrounds in architecture, planning, housing and historic preservation deployed to Palo to provide on-site community recovery guidance for 12 weeks and help launch an LTCR process. The LTCR team provided coordination, planning and facilitation support to the City, and to RIO staff and the Council of Government aiding Palo in its recovery.

The LTCR team worked with existing *recovery structures to create a platform for cooperation (p.53)*. *This process reinvigorated community collaboration (p.55)* and provided an opportunity for *new and varied leadership to emerge and lead the recovery (p.57)*. The partnership across a *broad cross-section of community members developed a vision for the City*, and produced the objectives and strategies necessary to achieve the type of recovery the community desired (p.45). The rebuilding is taking place with an eye towards improving drainage, reducing future flood impacts through the elevation of critical facilities, and acting on the Recovery Strategies developed with support from the LTCR team.<sup>27</sup>

Buy-in from government leadership *solidified ownership and commitment to implementing the recovery projects (p.50)*. Community leaders and the public are *dedicated to recovering quickly, and are moving projects forward. (p.51)*. Palo is progressing on several high impact projects including rebuilding the City Hall in an area outside the floodplain, transitioning to a public water system instead of using wells (which will enable Palo to attract new business), and storm water management projects to reduce the impacts of future flood events. Since developing its strategy document, the city has made progress on more than 70 percent of its objectives in the economic and business and infrastructure sectors. The City has continued to work on comprehensive planning and acknowledges the *value of the LTCR process in contributing to future planning efforts (p.49)*.

Palo provides an example where the LTCR team *transition was seen as timely and appropriate (p.58)*. LTCR team members were able to provide follow-up assistance to local leadership through a series of workshops. Palo continues to make headway on its recovery, showing how a small town can maximize opportunities for state and federal assistance while maintaining ownership of the recovery process.



Palo City Hall/Community Center under construction



Long-Term Community Recovery Strategy – Waverly, Iowa

### **City of Waverly, Bremer County**

The Cedar River flows through the main commercial and residential district of the City of Waverly, so when the river reached 19.3 feet – eight feet above flood stage – the city's core felt the impact. Damages in the June 2008 flood included an estimated 700 homes or about 15 percent of the housing stock, 100 businesses, and three of the eight schools in the Waverly-Shell Rock school system. In August, the LTCR team was introduced to City staff by RIO and the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments. An LTCR team of four professionals, based in the Cedar Falls office, began working

with Waverly and its recovery partners to create a bridge between community members affected by the flooding and those spared. The team helped community leadership articulate a recovery strategy and seek community input to evaluate and confirm recovery options. The LTCR team facilitated the development of a *coordination structure to encourage a platform for the recovery effort (p.53)*. Community outreach ensured that *all community members, whether directly impacted or not, had the opportunity to engage in the visioning process (p.45)*.

The LTCR team concluded its field support in December 2008, with the publication of the Waverly Long-Term Community Recovery Strategy.<sup>28</sup> In February 2009, the LTCR team conducted a workshop to provide tools for implementing the LTCR Strategy. The Waverly Long-Term Community Recovery Strategy outlined action steps in three focus areas: Housing, Economic/Community Impact, and Infrastructure/Flood Control. These action steps require funding and coordination among multiple entities. The community is moving forward on more than 90 percent of the action steps outlined in the Strategy. Residents continue to work together to focus on reducing future flood impacts, rebuild with Smart Growth principles, apply for and use federal funds to relocate families out of the floodway, plan for a city with open space, and implement land use practices to co-exist with the Cedar River.

### 2008 MIDWEST FLOODS - WISCONSIN

In June 2008, as a result of severe rains, much of southern Wisconsin experienced flooding. The state created the Wisconsin Recovery Task Force (WRTF) to focus on securing funding and resources needed for recovery. The Task Force was responsible for establishing principles and policies for redevelopment, leading long-term community and regional planning efforts, ensuring transparency and accountability in the investment of recovery funds, and communicating progress. The Federal Coordinating Officer activated ESF #14 LTCR in June 2008. The LTCR team met with the state and local officials from the villages of Gays Mills and Rock Springs to offer technical assistance with

the recovery. The state utilized FEMA support to develop and implement the work of the WRTF. The communities accepted LTCR technical assistance from community-based planning teams. With LTCR support, the state built the WRTF and created a framework for agencies to work together. They published a Wisconsin Recovery Task Force Report to the Governor summarizing the challenges and opportunities ahead. The community of Gays Mills launched a recovery planning effort to guide redevelopment and officials hired a recovery manager to advance critical projects.

#### ***Village of Gays Mills, Crawford County***

The Kickapoo River rose 20 feet in June 2008, exceeding the 500-year flood level for the second time in less than one year. In the Village of Gays Mills, 50 percent of homes were inundated with three to six feet of water. The infrastructure of downtown and the adjacent areas received significant damage. Just one year before, a similar flood damaged the town. After this second flood, the community earnestly began to explore relocating the town out of the floodplain to prevent future flooding damage. However, there was confusion and dissension over a course of action. At a town meeting, the village residents voted to ask if FEMA or the state could help the town relocate out of the floodplain.<sup>29</sup> In response to this request, the six person LTCR team deployed to Gays Mills to provide comprehensive community recovery planning assistance. In August of 2008, the LTCR team began 90 days of intensive work with the community to develop its Recovery Plan. Gays Mills' recovery goal was clear: To be a safe and affordable place where families can raise their children and businesses can serve the community without threat of devastating losses from future floods. The LTCR planning process helped the community determine how to achieve this goal.

This community is an example of using existing and trusted community entities to lead recovery. In Gays Mills, the long range planning committee, while limited in resources, was *trusted by the community and took a leadership role in long-term recovery planning (p.46)*. Facilitated workshops and planning charettes were held to obtain community

input on the range of alternatives for relocating parts of the village. Using land suitability tools, the LTCR team identified sites for relocation that were within or adjacent to Gays Mills, and prepared four conceptual plans that included costs for acquisition, engineering, environmental, and construction of roads and utilities. Residents deliberated and chose a site for relocation, which then became the basis for the LTCR Plan. Gays Mills felt it lacked the technical expertise and staff to implement the vision and projects outlined in their recovery plan. With assistance from the LTCR team, Gays Mills secured funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Social Service Block Grants and EDA grants to fund a Recovery Manager. Community-based organizations stepped up to assist, finding

### 2008 HURRICANE IKE IN TEXAS

In September 2008, Hurricane Ike slammed into the Texas Gulf Coast as a Category 2 hurricane with sustained winds of 100 mph, and an estimated storm surge of 17 feet. Many of the impacted communities were still recovering from Hurricane Rita. The State of Texas established a high-level Governor's Commission to review policy issues emerging from Hurricanes Ike and Dolly. A tactical-level recovery organization was not formed, so LTCR teams worked directly with state agencies, county judges, Councils of Government, and local officials to engage in recovery planning support in five communities and counties.



Galveston, TX LTCR Open House



Bolivar Blueprint Steering Committee

grant funds, providing housing, and off-setting the relocation cost until the funding could be secured. The momentum towards successful recovery was continued by the community and assisted by the hiring of a Recovery Manager. This ongoing ***dedicated leadership helped to facilitate recovery project implementation (p.57)***. When the Recovery Manager was hired, the community was already moving forward and ready to assist and support. Today, the community has moved forward with 12 of 17 projects identified in the LTCR plan, and has continued to rely on its recovery partnerships and experience with community planning to support sustainable development.

The LTCR teams concluded their intensive planning support in April 2009, but some areas still needed targeted support. FEMA provided technical assistance to Chambers County and Bolivar Peninsula to help sustain and advance recovery efforts through additional planning efforts and implementation coordination. Today, the communities have established recovery organizations to manage redevelopment, hired grant writers, and are actively pursuing resources.

### ***City of Galveston, Galveston County***

Hurricane Ike came ashore on Galveston Island with sustained winds of 110 mph, gusts of 125 mph, a

significant storm surge and an eye that was 46 miles wide. The Galveston Seawall protected the city from direct storm wave attack, but the storm surge that came through the bay damaged 75 percent of the city’s structures. In early October, the LTCR team met with local elected officials, the City Manager and the Planning Department to discuss the city’s approach to long-term recovery and what assistance ESF #14 could provide. These conversations prompted the Mayor and City Council to establish a recovery committee. In November 2008, the City Council began appointing residents to the Galveston Long-Term Community Recovery Committee (GCRC). At the end of six weeks there was a 330- person committee comprised of citizens and business leaders from the community at large. Galveston’s approach illustrates one way a

outreach, facilitating public input meetings both on and off the island, and providing technical assistance developing Galveston’s Long-Term Community Recovery Plan.

The city ensured that the recovery committee was citizen-led and this created a sense of *trust in the recovery process (p.46)*. It provided an *opportunity for all community members to engage in the visioning, goal and project development process (p.45)*. The high level of participation signified that the community believed in the LTCR process, and gave the community *ownership over the recovery (p.39)*.



Chambers County LTCR meeting



Damaged homes in Bolivar Peninsula after Hurricane Ike

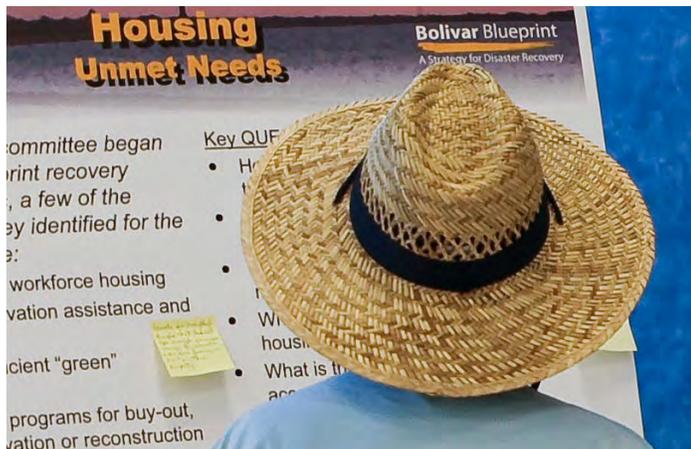
community *can take responsibility for their recovery process (p.39)*. Local leadership recognized the value of the LTCR process and worked to implement the process. *Ideally, existing systems would facilitate the LTCR process (p.46)*, but in the case of Galveston, it was determined that a dedicated recovery committee was necessary.

GCRC was charged with developing a vision, goals, and projects to put Galveston on the road to full recovery. The city’s planning staff, consumed with the obligations of short-term recovery activities, could not dedicate their full attention to the planning effort. The city requested support from the LTCR team to assist the committee by coordinating public

As a result of this effort, 42 recovery projects were developed in the focus areas of environment, housing and community character, health and education, and transportation and infrastructure. The Galveston City Council adopted the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan in April 2009, providing *official recognition to the LTCR plan (p.50)*. Today, new civic leaders who arose from the GCRC recovery continue to actively push forward the City’s recovery. Of the 42 projects in the LTCR Plan, 30 are at various stages of implementation. Recovery projects and strategies were integrated into existing city plans and policies, including the new Comprehensive Plan, which was encouraged by the LTCR process. The LTCR planning *process helped the community unite to focus on future planning (p.49)*.

### **Bolivar Peninsula, Galveston County**

Hurricane Ike leveled most of the structures on Bolivar Peninsula, leaving more than 60 percent of homes substantially damaged or destroyed, most of



A resident considers questions and ideas at a Bolivar Blueprint recovery planning workshop

the peninsula's residents displaced, and dramatically changing the lives of its residents. County officials and peninsula residents struggled with the loss of life and homes, and the mountains of debris that had to be removed, even as they began talking about rebuilding. In February the LTCR Team made an offer of support that was accepted by county officials. In March, the team began working with Bolivar residents to establish the Bolivar Blueprint steering committee. A larger committee was assembled from citizens and stakeholder groups to represent business, public, and private interests from the five unincorporated communities on the Peninsula. The committee worked through a recovery planning process to identify a vision, goals and options for key recovery alternatives. This process led to the Bolivar Blueprint,<sup>30</sup> a document that outlined the various rebuilding options available to Bolivar.

The LTCR planning team demobilized in May 2009, leaving the further development and implementation of the Blueprint in the hands of a county-funded Recovery Manager. In early 2010 as a result of an additional request, **targeted support for implementation was given to the Steering Committee to reinvigorate and refocus efforts and**

**build local capacity to sustain these efforts (p.59).**

A two-person team worked with the Galveston County Emergency Management Coordinator and the Recovery Manager to establish the non-profit Peninsula Development Coalition (PenDeCo) as a primary local implementation arm for high priority projects. The second phase of the Blueprint defined 28 recovery projects and defined action steps required to implement projects. The Galveston County Commissioners Court received and filed the Bolivar Blueprint on February 24, 2010. According to the Emergency Management Coordinator, "this action has enabled the Bolivar Blueprint to become the basis of discussion and primary document for moving projects forward through the Commissioners Court and is recognized and authorized by the Court in this manner." New partnerships were established to help the community with seven high priority projects. These partnerships include the Houston-Galveston Area Council to support the regional Sustainable Communities program (under the HUD, USDOT, and USEPA funded program), and the University of Houston Hurricane Business Recovery Center for assistance with business projects. FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds are being used by Galveston County to buy out approximately 650 properties, which will be managed as open space under a plan developed by PenDeCo to benefit the community. The PenDeCo board continues to meet weekly to guide the implementation of the Peninsula's recovery plan.

### **Chambers County**

Storm surge and winds generated by Hurricane Ike pushed into Chambers County from Galveston, East, and Trinity bays, causing severe flooding and wind damage to coastal communities leaving tremendous amounts of debris clogging coastal wetlands, waterways and land. Salt water contaminated wells and septic systems up to 10 miles inland, and caused substantial damage to the county's agricultural lands and natural areas. A rural county, Chambers did not have the staff or resident expertise to confront the recovery challenges at hand. When the LTCR team offered technical assistance, the County Judge and Mayor of Anahuac readily accepted. They became **actively involved in leading, managing and taking responsibility for the recovery process (p.39).** The

team helped the county establish the Chambers Recovery Team (ChaRT) to serve as the steering committee for recovery. After the LTCR team demobilized in May 2009, ChaRT lost momentum. FEMA conducted a follow-up evaluation which prompted LTCR to *strategically re-engage to energize the organization (p.59)*. County officials saw this follow-up support as a significant catalyst to getting the recovery back on track.

In 2010, Chambers hired a grant writer to help implement its recovery plan. The county is enforcing elevation and building code compliance for rebuilding. ChaRT received 501(c)(3) tax exempt status and restructured the board to represent a geographic cross section of the county and to include business, environment and resident interests. ChaRT’s focus is now on accessing local and state funding so that they can complete projects and build a track record. This will help them pursue non-profit resources and foundation grants. ChaRT has established a priority recovery project to promote economic development through tourism and has a contract with Chambers County to develop a nature tourism plan. On November 9, 2010, Chambers County appropriated \$25,000 to ChaRT to “assist the organization with enhancing the county’s ability to attract visitors to stay in Chambers County.” ChaRT is

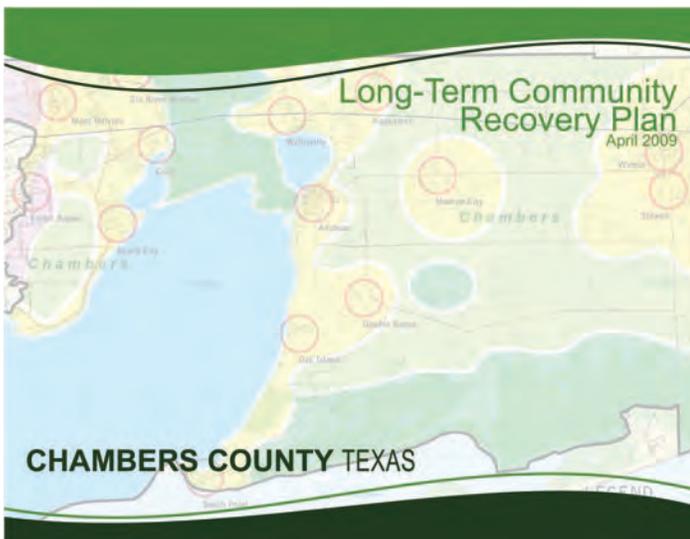
planning an annual meeting that will be open to the public. The focus of the meeting will be to present the recovery projects from the LTCR plan to the community, and show the status of the projects and progress on recovery, and to gain public input.

**2009 GEORGIA FLOODS**

In late September 2009, severe storms moved through Georgia, causing severe local flooding reported by the National Weather Service as a 10,000 year event. At the request of the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) and State Coordinating Officer (SCO), Long-Term Community Recovery (LTCR) assistance was requested on October 8, 2009. An assessment showed the majority of damage occurred in the housing sector in several communities, although businesses were impacted as well.

The Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) established 12 interagency recovery work groups to address short and long-term flood recovery. LTCR provided coordination support to the work groups and targeted technical assistance to the communities of Austell, Powder Springs, and Lithia Springs. Powder Springs city staff only required limited consultation and technical assistance from LTCR, which provided recommendations to help them organize recovery efforts. In the City of Austell, a Long-Term Community Recovery Specialist with city management experience was deployed to assist the Mayor and city leadership in establishing priorities and organizing for their long-term recovery effort. This technical specialist helped the City resolve pressing recovery issues caused by the flood.

Technical assistance and coordination included facilitation of city and partner meetings and technical expertise in work group activities. LTCR partnered with HUD to help the Cobb County Emergency Management Agency host a Mortgage Summit. The Summit brought together federal and state agencies and nonprofit organizations to address the dual challenges of flood damage and high foreclosure rates in the area, and to present homeowners with alternatives to abandoning their property. Agencies participating in the Summit included HUD, US Small Business Administration (SBA), US Internal Revenue



Long-Term Community Recovery Plan – Chambers County, TX

Service (IRS), Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and GEMA. This is one example of how *coordinated federal assistance can achieve the greatest impact for communities during recovery (p.63)*. LTCR provided technical assistance to the Austell city staff to work with FEMA and the State Hazard Mitigation Offices to develop an acquisition plan for destroyed homes eligible for acquisition. The LTCR specialist also recommended the City undertake the development of a recovery strategy to identify next steps and to address the need for a more holistic recovery.

### 2010 SPIRIT LAKE NATION, NORTH DAKOTA

Devils Lake, also known as Spirit Lake, is a closed basin lake which has risen some 29 feet in the last 17 years. The lake has grown from 45,000 acres to 146,000 acres and inundated more than 30,000 acres of the Spirit Lake Tribal Nation (SLN). Residents flooded out of their homes have moved in with relatives, causing overcrowding. People become ill from mold caused by the damp environment and ground water infiltration into homes. The lake's encroachment on agricultural lands and enterprises has negatively impacted economic development and employment rates in the area. On May 3, 2010, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate participated in the Devils Lake "Flood Summit," where he stressed the importance of focusing on Long-Term Community Recovery and indicated that ESF #14 assistance might be appropriate. The Spirit Lake Tribal Council requested ESF #14 support.

From July through December 2010, the Spirit Lake Nation and LTCR team facilitated a community-wide recovery planning process that resulted in the Spirit Lake Nation Recovery Plan. Tribal working groups focused on issues such as health, social services, economic development, infrastructure, housing, and natural and cultural resources. Through a series of community meetings, tribal members were asked to vote and provide input on recovery priorities. In December, the tribe hosted a Recovery Conference, where 150 people from various federal and state agencies and non-profits convened to help Spirit Lake identify programs

that might aid implementation of the SLN Recovery Plan. The progress and partnerships highlighted the necessity for *communities and potential funders to work together to catalyze recovery project implementation (p.55)*.

The Tribal Council is exploring the establishment of a Tribal Planning Policy Institute so that other tribes can benefit from the SLN recovery experience. It has been proposed that the recovery manager be at the core of this endeavor. EDA plans to fund a Recovery Manager position. EPA will provide Smart Growth Assistance. DOE is supporting the tribe's efforts to establish a large wind farm. *Those in leadership are striving to sustain interagency coordination and continue to build on these efforts and support (p.64)*.

### 2011 ALABAMA TORNADOS

In response to two devastating tornado outbreaks in April, ESF #14 conducted evaluations of 31 heavily impacted communities. Five were targeted for LTCR recovery planning, while six were identified for technical assistance that would focus on the development of strategies for specific recovery issues. The communities requiring targeted technical assistance primarily suffered a serious loss of housing, while those requiring full LTCR teams suffered losses across multiple sectors including housing, business, health facilities and public facilities. FEMA and its



Spirit Lake Tribal members



Residents provide input on community recovery project priorities

partner agencies applied some of the principles of the draft National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) to build a coordinated recovery effort and a collaborative structure between federal and state agencies. A Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator (FDRC) was deployed and all six Recovery Support Functions (RSFs) were established to structure federal interagency support. The Regional Planning Commissions were also engaged to collaborate on long-term community recovery planning. This successful coordination of resources illustrates how *coordinating federal information and efforts is most productive within an established system (p.65)*.

## LESSONS LEARNED IN COMMUNITY RECOVERY

The LTCR experiences of ESF #14 provide a wealth of examples to illustrate the successes and challenges of applying the principles of community recovery. This section shares the lessons derived from this experience, and identifies ways to more successfully achieve disaster recovery. There are eight major components of a successful recovery:

1. Local Ownership and Direction
2. A Common Vision for Recovery

3. Plan for Recovery
4. The Timeline for Recovery is Long
5. Partnerships and Organizing
6. Leadership and Consistency
7. Role of the State Government
8. Federal Operations and Support

Throughout this section ESF #14 LTCR principles are identified and explained, and the ESF #14 approach and philosophy are summarized. These principles were developed and refined by ESF #14 LTCR while working with communities, evolving and adapting to better support recovery. The six principles which guide the ESF #14 LTCR approach are based on the idea that all engagements:

- Are Community Driven
- Build Local Capacity
- Are Project Oriented
- Promote Mitigation
- Build Partnership and Coordination
- Engage the community

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## LESSON 1: LOCAL OWNERSHIP AND DIRECTION

The recovery process is most productive and successful when it is locally driven, from planning to implementation, and the entire community is vested in the process from the outset. Recovery planning technical assistance provided by outsiders does not supplant the local capacity, and it builds trust among the partners in recovery.

### THE LOCAL COMMUNITY MUST LEAD AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PLANS AND DECISIONS MADE DURING THE RECOVERY PROCESS – GALVESTON, TX AND CHAMBERS COUNTY, TX

The dedication and commitment of local leaders and residents is the cornerstone of successful recovery. Technical experts can provide support, advice and guidance. For a community to truly manage its recovery, local residents and leaders must be the

#### ESF #14 PRINCIPLE #1

**Community Driven** – The community is made up of a diverse group of individuals and organizations that together form the whole, and must be vested in the outcomes of the recovery for it to be a success. Public participation in the recovery process will ensure broad support and collaboration and make use of local knowledge and resources. Only the local community knows what is in their best interest, and therefore, LTCR aids local government in engaging all elements of their community in planning for recovery. LTCR also seeks to focus coordination and partnership efforts among federal and state agencies on the specific challenges, needs and issues.

primary players in all aspects of the process, from guiding resources to engaging the community at large. Following hurricanes Ike and Gustav, ESF#14 LTCR provided support to Galveston, Texas encouraging the Mayor, City Manager and city staff to establish a recovery committee with a cross section of the community. The City of Galveston then looked to the community to guide their recovery planning process. The city leadership supported the creation and implementation of a formal city-appointed 330- person recovery committee. The recovery committee, led by a recognized non-governmental community leader, worked to develop the recovery plan with ESF#14 LTCR support. The LTCR team aided the committee and city in evaluating projects for their value in stimulating long-term recovery. The final LTCR plan document included projects that



**Make Your Voice Heard  
Chambers County Community Meetings**

**Smith Point**  
Date: Saturday, Jan. 31, 2009  
Time: 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Smith Point Community Center  
Plummer Camp Road

**Mont Belvieu**  
Date: Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2009  
Time: 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Place: Professional Develop. Center  
Barbers Hill Kindergarten Campus  
9600 Eagle Drive

**Anahuac**  
Date: Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2009  
Time: 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Place: Whites Park Community Center  
225 Whites Memorial Drive

**Oak Island**  
Date: Friday, Feb. 6, 2009  
Time: 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Place: Oak Island Baptist Church  
707 W. Bayshore Road

**Winnie**  
Date: Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009  
Time: 2:00 - 6:00 p.m.  
Place: St. Louis Catholic Church Gym  
315 W. Buccaneer Road

Your input is valuable to planning our community's recovery from Hurricane Ike. Come early or come late, but please make your voice heard at any one of the Open House meetings. Your participation should take less than one hour of your time. Your voice is important.



Bring your *Ideas*.  
Bring your *Dreams*.  
Bring your *Neighbors*.  
Plan for the future of *OUR* community together.

**Think Big. Think Long Term.**

Sponsored by Chambers County Long-Term Recovery Steering Committee and FEMA

Chambers County community meeting flyer

Experience over the last 6 years shows that ESF #14 LTCR and other supporting entities must help a community develop the capacity to lead, manage and implement its own recovery. Planning for and managing recovery is a process the community leads and takes part in, not something that is done to, or forced upon a community.



Greensburg Recovery Meeting



Chambers County LTCR steering committee

were important to community members and that organizations could immediately begin seeking funding for. Two years later, 30 of the 42 original projects were in some stage of implementation. It is important that any assistance to help communities evaluate, value or prioritize projects is not perceived or implemented in such a way that diminishes full community ownership.

In Chambers County, Texas, following Hurricane Ike, ESF #14 LTCR supported organizing and planning for recovery. In the initial meetings, county leaders were hesitant and unsure of the usefulness of an unfamiliar planning and coordination system. FEMA facilitated peer-to-peer conversations with communities in other states that had experiences with LTCR. Despite those initial reservations, the county and municipality leadership, with support from LTCR, established a structure for working together and representing the community as a whole. The community was able to lead and take responsibility for recovery through participation in the Chambers Recovery Team (ChaRT), which served as the steering committee for the recovery planning process. ChaRT formed seven sub-committees to help plan the recovery process: Infrastructure, Agriculture, Economic & Industry, Education, Trinity Bay Restoration, Healthcare & Emergency Services, and Community Development.

### ESF #14 PRINCIPLE #2

**Build Local Capacity** – LTCR seeks to build local capacity and capability to manage recovery. LTCR Support is intended to meet immediate needs to organize and launch recovery planning, but also is intended to build future capacity at the state and local level that will serve long term and for the next disaster.

Two rounds of public involvement meetings and three planning workshops were conducted to inform, educate and engage the public in identifying recovery issues and projects. The Mayor of the City of Anahuac served as the Chair of ChaRT and wrote regular progress updates in the “Mayor’s Corner” of the local paper and website. From this recovery organizational structure and community engagement process, a Chambers County Long-Term Recovery Plan was developed. After an LTCR follow-up visit, ChaRT was encouraged to hire a Recovery Manager to keep the recovery plan on track. Follow up support after LTCR team demobilization also helped to ensure the county remained focused on implementation and management of this process. A part time Recovery Manager was hired and is still helping to keep the Chamber’s County long-term recovery moving forward.



Greensburg Business incubator

### **STRONG LOCAL CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY ARE REQUIRED FOR RECOVERY TO SUCCEED – GREENSBURG, KS, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, AND HANCOCK COUNTY, MS**

Local communities must possess or build the capacity to own, direct and manage the recovery process to be successful. This can be particularly challenging for a community that has not had to deal with these types of complex issues, must work collaboratively to achieve a great deal in a short time, or that has just lost a significant portion of its tax base. Recovery planning assistance is most successful when it supports leaders and officials to develop a process, increase local capacity and locate resources that empower them to carry out strategies based on community input.

The State of Kansas and ESF #14 LTCR provided support to the community of Greensburg to organize and plan for recovery in a systematic way. Large numbers of residents participated in the 12 week LTCR planning process to envision their future. Using the Public Square process supported by the state, residents organized along the lines of Government, Education, Business, Health and Community Services, Housing and Green Initiatives. The intent of this planning and public involvement process was to build local leadership confidence and capacity as well as to foster connections that created commitment. Once the plan was developed, Action Teams were formed to develop implementation strategies.

The initial capacity of the community might have been limited or compromised, but the high level of commitment by the state and other outside resources, and consistent support, helped rebuild and strengthen the community's leadership capacity. Today, many of the projects and strategies identified by the community have been acted on, including developing a Sustainable Master Plan and building a new City Hall, Arts Center and business incubator.

Federal, state and other outside recovery staff or support intend to be helpful, but there is a line between assistance and creating dependency. Empowering communities to surmount the challenges inherent in redevelopment can be problematic for long-term capacity. In Mississippi, the ESF #14 LTCR team transitioned to a small Recovery Support Office based out of FEMA's Transitional Recovery Office. The team of recovery professionals continued to help counties implement the projects in Mississippi county recovery plans through March of 2010, four and half years after Hurricane Katrina made landfall. When the office closed, the Hancock County Board of Supervisors and other local officials sent letters requesting the extension of LTCR support. They said they relied on the federal recovery staff to help with identifying funding sources, conducting analysis, developing and evaluating regional policies and strategies, and coordinating with the FEMA Transitional Recovery Office and state, federal, and local counterparts. When federal resources stay longer to support the implementation phase of recovery, it can displace what should be the primary solution to capacity challenges, which is development of state and local capacity. As the LTCR support in Mississippi demonstrates, addressing capacity gaps only gets postponed, not ameliorated, by keeping federal staff in place.

### **COMMUNITIES NEED AN ORGANIZED WAY TO ACCESS AND UTILIZE SUPPORT RESOURCES TO BUILD CAPACITY – REBUILD IOWA OFFICE**

Agencies and organizations providing recovery planning assistance should aim not only for direct support, but also to direct communities to available capacity building resources and linkages with state government. They should serve as an avenue to



Banner showing partnership of State of Iowa and ESF #14



Materials created for Rebuild Iowa Day

resources the community might not know how to access. In the past, LTCR has worked with the EDA to provide funding for Recovery Managers, identified ways for HUD CDBG funding to provide capacity and additional planning support, engaged the US Department of Agriculture -Rural Development to provide leadership seminars, funded Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) smart growth workshops and plans, worked with the University of Iowa, and engaged other partners to provide assistance to communities. To solidify this type of additional technical assistance, FEMA has been developing additional guidance for coordination and leveraging of federal program resources and technical expertise. This approach will be a key element of the Community Planning and Capacity Building Recovery Support Function (RSF) under the new National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF).

Federal resources are important, but it is the state that must be engaged as one of the closest and most direct levels of support and capacity building for the community. LTCR partnered with the Rebuild Iowa Office to support their work with communities on recovery plans. After LTCR transitioned out of the

state, RIO was in place to provide a continued and sustained level of support that would not have been possible otherwise. RIO created an organizational element called the Community and Regional Recovery Planning team that provided ongoing support and liaison to impacted communities. Utilizing these resources to build capacity is an important way to leverage resources and to help build more sustainable communities. Few states have such an organized process for addressing the variety of recovery capacities needed by communities. Even Iowa, which was successful with RIO, created the organization in the aftermath of the disaster.



LTCR team members help host a booth at the City of Palo "Fun Day" celebration, to gather a wider spectrum of participation in recovery plan



Iowa ESF #14 LTCR Resource Guide



City of Palo, Iowa, LTCR planning workshop

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## LESSON 2: CREATE A COMMON VISION FOR RECOVERY

After a disaster, a community will want to figure out where it wants to go and how to address the often greatly changed circumstances. This requires developing goals and a vision for the future. An inclusive visioning process that partners with local organizations or committees is crucial for community members and established or emerging leaders to take ownership of the resulting recovery vision. Existing community organizations provide a foundation and starting point for organizing and visioning recovery. They also can help build trust and participation in the process. LTCR has found that adapting the methods by which support is provided to communities helps ensure that the community's unique characteristics are addressed, and builds confidence in the process.

### ALL PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY ARE NEEDED TO CREATE A RECOVERY VISION – STATE OF LOUISIANA, WAVERLY AND PALO, IA, GALVESTON, TX

Engaging all parts of the community to develop the vision and support its implementation gives credibility to the LTCR process and increases the chances for success. Outreach should be tailored to the unique needs of the population after the disaster. It must provide access for all individuals, addressing any functional or accessibility limitations. Following Hurricane Katrina, the Louisiana Speaks initiative supported by LTCR used many strategies to engage as much of the local and displaced population as possible in the development of recovery visions, plans and strategies. Five meetings were held in Louisiana, and 12 outside the State in addition to 37 local open houses held simultaneously in 20 impacted parishes. Phone surveys, workshops, charettes and public meetings were also part of the outreach. More than 10,000 citizens participated in some way in the LTCR planning process.<sup>31</sup> Many local and national organizations and agencies worked together to support this effort, recognizing the value of engaging as much of the community as possible.

LTCR has used a variety of strategies and methods to help state and local governments design a recovery process that facilitates consensus across a community spectrum. In Waverly, Iowa, for example,

*“The invention required [to address planning issues] is not a device for coordination at the generalized top, but rather an invention to make coordination possible where the need is most acute – in specific and unique localities.”*

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 418.

Louisiana Recovery Planning Day newspaper ad

a stakeholder group was guided through the LTCR Decision Making Tool and Project Development Guide<sup>32</sup>. This helped community leadership to articulate recovery strategies, then seek community



Gays Mills residents consider options for relocation of all or part of their small town after 2 years of devastating flooding

input to evaluate and confirm priorities. In Palo, Iowa, LTCR helped facilitate the entire community, not just its leadership, through a visioning process that led to a strategic plan based on input from three public forums and open houses. In Galveston, the Galveston Community Recovery Committee (GCRC) even engaged the committee members in determining how to prioritize recovery projects and analyze which had the greatest catalytic impact or value for LTCR. With a range of community consensus building methods, LTCR can build on each community's unique capacities and strengths.

### WORKING WITH EXISTING COMMUNITY SYSTEMS BUILDS TRUST AND EXPEDITES THE RECOVERY PROCESS – GAYS MILLS, WI AND GALVESTON, TX

The first step in supporting community engagement is to identify any existing state or local organizations or committees that could be built on immediately to develop and implement the recovery strategy. In many LTCR engagements, no such organization or committee is present. Consequently, one of the core LTCR activities in the field has become working with the community to establish a recovery structure and process.

Where possible, ESF#14 LTCR teams have also worked with communities to identify organizations that can adapt their mission to include disaster recovery. For example, in Gays Mills, Wisconsin, the existing

### ESF #14 PRINCIPLE #3

**Project-Oriented** – LTCR attempts to help communities demonstrate recovery momentum by focusing on action steps and goals that can be monitored and achieved. LTCR also seeks to focus agencies with possible recovery resources on specific and clearly articulated community needs. If leaders only talk about recovery or make general promises but are unable to translate those conversations and plans into action, support for recovery efforts will lose momentum and possibly support of affected communities.

long range planning committee, while limited in resources, was trusted by the community and took a leadership role in long-term recovery planning, supported by LTCR. In communities without such structures in place, considerably more time was spent helping establish recovery committees and task forces for people to organize and work together for recovery. Comprehensive planning bodies are not usually in a position to act quickly, flexibly or broadly enough to address accelerated recovery planning, but they can provide a foundation if none other exists. Galveston initially explored using its comprehensive planning process but decided against stretching that group to incorporate recovery planning. Instead, the city formed a recovery committee and appointed the executive of the primary Galveston community foundation as chair. Existing systems and structures for coordinating and communicating within a community can be built on to expedite the process of creating a common vision for recovery, providing a foundation of trust for the work ahead.

### COMMUNITY TRUST IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS IS IMPORTANT TO COMMUNITY MOMENTUM AND COMMITMENT – GALVESTON, TX AND GREENSBURG, KS

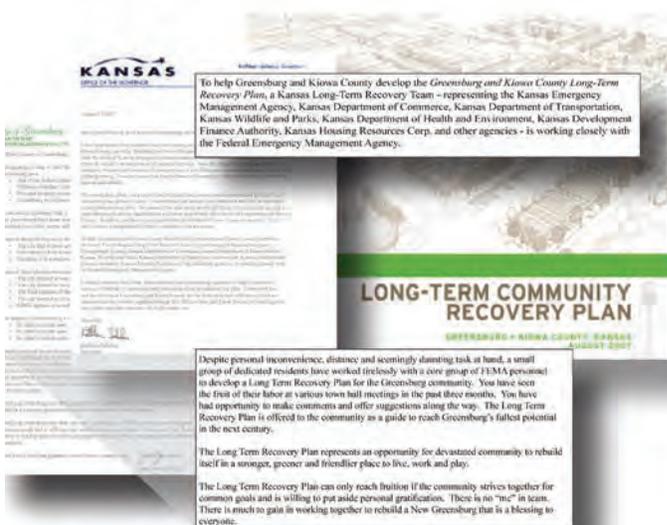
It can be difficult to ascertain precisely whether people trusted the LTCR recovery process. One way to measure the level of community trust is to see how involved individuals became in the process itself. The level of citizen engagement in the recovery process varied significantly across the communities featured

in this report. The LTRC processes in Galveston, Texas and Greensburg, Kansas, were probably the most participatory. In Greensburg, the community formed a committee that met weekly to discuss moving forward together. The planning process included a series of public meetings where hundreds of residents turned out to discuss ideas and to reconnect with neighbors and friends dispersed by the disaster. The result was unprecedented levels of participation and commitment to rebuilding the community.

In the high-capacity city of Galveston, Texas, citizens mistrusted previous city efforts. City Council established the Galveston Community Recovery Committee (GCRC), with membership open to any and all island residents. The committee was charged with developing a vision, goals and projects that could move Galveston to full recovery from the devastation of Hurricane Ike. With facilitation support from ESF #14 teams, more than 300 Galvestonians convened as official members of GCRC to identify recovery priorities and host open houses for residents to prioritize recovery issues. Ultimately they established 13 working groups, with 14 project development teams, that crafted the projects for the Galveston LTRC Plan. A website was established with support from the local newspaper to keep citizens abreast of the latest developments in the recovery process. The transparency, inclusiveness, and sheer number of Galvestonians involved in the LTRC Planning process are testimony to the trust people had in this recovery process.



Galveston Community Recovery Committee Meeting



Kansas Long-Term Recovery materials

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## ESF #14 PRINCIPLE #4

**Promote Mitigation** – LTCR promotes building safer, stronger and more resilient and encourages communities to make the most of the opportunity created during the recovery process. Recovery is only effective if it eliminates or reduces the risk that caused the event and improves the long-term sustainability of the community. LTCR supports coordinated decision making for massive reinvestment after extraordinary disasters; communities often need assistance to integrate mitigation into varied decisions and re-planning. Hazard mitigation, risk reduction and sustainability choices are integrated throughout recovery policy and reinvestment decisions.

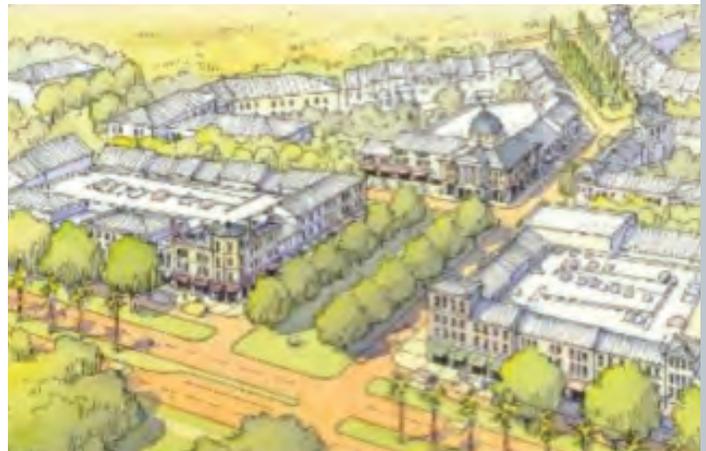
## LESSON 3: PLAN FOR RECOVERY

A recovery plan helps ensure that all stakeholders have the same understanding of the community's future direction, and the rationale for decisions. Once a community determines where it wants to go, it is important to formalize that vision, and make concrete plans on how to get to those end points. LTCR has worked with more than 160 communities to develop multiple types of planning and decision making documents, including basic project reports, documentation of goal setting meetings, development of option papers or strategies, and comprehensive long-term community recovery plans. These experiences illustrate the importance of planning for recovery.

### PARTNERING IN RECOVERY PLAN DEVELOPMENT ENABLES STRATEGIC USE OF LIMITED RECOVERY DOLLARS – GREENSBURG, KIOWA COUNTY, KS

Planning creates the opportunity for stakeholders to think through how projects could work together, develop new ideas to benefit more people, and leverage limited recovery dollars. In Greensburg, Kansas, the library and historic museum, each of which had limited operating capability prior to the disaster, decided to create a joint space. They partnered with the Kiowa County extension office and a new media center to pool funding, reduce

operating expenses, and leverage interest from each group's support and interest base. The collective – known as the Kiowa County Commons – broke ground in April of 2010. This project, which is certified Platinum through the LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System, is expected to be completed by June 2011.



Waverly Smart Planning Recovery Workshop Image, May 2010

### LTCR PLANNING IS AN IMPORTANT EARLY STEP TO ESTABLISH AGREEMENT ON FUTURE PLANNING EFFORTS – CALCASIEU AND WASHINGTON PARISH, LA, PALO, IA, GALVESTON, TX AND PENSACOLA, FL

After Hurricane Katrina, Washington Parish established a nine-member planning commission to administer land use ordinances. In June 2010, comprehensive development ordinances were formally approved by the parish council. New city staff positions were added to build capacity. Calcasieu Parish is also engaged in comprehensive planning. It used the projects listed in LTCR plan to jump start "Vision Calcasieu 2030" being developed with municipalities across the parish. The City of Sulphur in Calcasieu Parish has followed suit, engaging in a community planning process to create "Vision Sulphur." The City of Sulphur also created a Master Plan Advisory Committee in May 2010 to determine the roadmap for developing land use plans.

In Iowa, comprehensive plans and continuing local planning initiatives were informed by LTRC work. For instance, Palo brought its comprehensive plan up to date in the context of LTRC strategies, and obtained technical assistance from the East Central Iowa Council of Government, a new recovery partners. Working with LTRC catalyzed several Iowa communities to move to the next phase of sustainability planning. Six of the 10 communities assisted by LTRC received EPA Smart Growth assistance for additional planning, including more detailed infrastructure and development strategies, policy reviews and design concepts. The Cities of Galveston and Pensacola, which had a strong history of comprehensive planning, updated those documents based on LTRC efforts. As a result, Pensacola is currently implementing the new Pensacola Urban Core Community Redevelopment Area Plan (2010), and Galveston's downtown redevelopment plan, identified in the LTRC plan, is underway. In all of these examples, community engagement in the LTRC process catalyzed planning for future growth and development.

### OFFICIAL RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE OF RECOVERY PLANNING SOLIDIFIES OWNERSHIP AND COMMITMENT – GALVESTON, TX, PALO, IA, AND CALCASIEU PARISH, LA

Many of the communities served by LTRC teams officially adopted their plan or strategy, creating an official framework for recovery and creating measurable indicators of progress. The Galveston City Council accepted the Long-Term Community Recovery Plan developed by the GCRC; two years later, more than 70 percent of the projects in the LTRC plan have been implemented. In Palo, the Economic and Business Recovery LTRC Strategy called for the town to create its own public water utility, and end reliance on individual water supply. In August 2009, citizens passed a measure for the city to create its own public water utility, a measure that had failed twice in the past eight years. The severity of the flooding, and the importance of this action for the Economic and Business Recovery LTRC Strategy changed the voter's perspectives. Palo also established a Chamber of Commerce to actively retain local businesses and established stronger flood ordinances to help build back safer and stronger. At

the state level, Iowa passed Smart Growth legislation that dovetailed with larger planning objectives, and this legal framework reinforced sustainable recovery.

In communities that did not officially adopt recovery plans and strategies, there is greater variability in how projects are pursued and implemented. In Calcasieu Parish, the absence of actual adoption of plans meant that adherence to LTRC was in the hands of government officials motivated to see elements of the plan implemented. While the plan was not officially adopted, planners and politicians that had been involved in the process ensured that the recovery concepts and projects informed other planning documents and frameworks used by the Parish.



Long-Term Community Recovery Plan – Galveston, TX



Louisiana Planning Day



Screenshot of Louisiana Speaks Long-Term Community Recovery Planning Website

## LESSON 4: THE TIMELINE FOR RECOVERY IS LONG

Communities evolve slowly over hundreds of years, growing either organically or within a structure of land use and zoning regulations. The course of development is affected by climate, politics and culture. When a disaster event occurs, it shocks and changes the entire community system all at once. The amount of time it takes for a community to recover from a disaster event will vary, depending on the scale and timing of the disaster, the state and local community’s capacity to address recovery issues, and the influences of the larger region and economy. When capacity is compromised or reduced, there are greater challenges to receiving and effectively utilizing recovery support. ESF #14 has learned that communities must be positioned to plan and adapt over the long term. Outside support can assist and advise, but for a successful and timely recovery, the public must be committed to the process.

### PUBLIC COMMITMENT AND MOMENTUM CAN ACCELERATE THE TIMELINE FOR RECOVERY – PENSACOLA, FL, PALO, IA AND SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA.

The key to the success and speed of recovery is the public’s commitment to the recovery process. Federal resources are put in place temporarily to help the process; it is up to the state and local governments



Palo City Hall/Community Center Ground-Breaking, May 2010

and community members to carry out the recovery. Local ownership of the recovery planning process and implementation of the recovery vision is critical. In Pensacola, Florida, the private sector assisted in bringing LTRC support after Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and served as a resource for local officials. The efforts of the private sector, along with the community’s interest in self-organizing for recovery and the development of a broad-based community structure, contributed to the vitality, perseverance, and success of recovery efforts.

Strong project champions in the community can drive recovery projects forward. It can take months or years to build political support and/or obtain funding. Continuing local support is vital to maintain stakeholder interest and engagement for successful implementation of recovery projects. Palo, Iowa experienced severe flooding in June 2008 that affected 95 percent of the community. The town’s city hall was damaged and the town decided to rebuild it in an area outside of the floodplain. The process of evaluating sites, obtaining funding and designing the facility took almost two years, with groundbreaking in May 2010. In Southwest Louisiana, business leaders worked in partnership with a local university to obtain land and funding for an entrepreneurial center that would serve southwest Louisiana. This project was put forth post-Katrina during the LTRC planning process. Ground was broken in October 2010 for the Southwest Louisiana Entrepreneurial and Economic

Development (SEED) Center. The commitment of local leaders in these communities drove key recovery projects forward. Without local champions, recovery projects may founder and the overall recovery of the community will take longer.

### **REDUCED CAPACITY IMPACTS WHEN COMMUNITIES FEEL RECOVERY ASSISTANCE IS APPROPRIATE AND USEFUL – STATE OF TEXAS**

Ideally, the process of response and recovery would occur in parallel, and the community could take the long-term plan for the community into consideration immediately after the disaster event. In reality, community members are nearly always focused entirely on efforts to address urgent, immediate needs of individuals and the community. State officials in Texas felt that LTCR's requests for information, meetings and follow-ups were burdensome in the early response phase of Hurricane Ike.<sup>33</sup> The City of Galveston felt the attempts to engage the community came too soon after the disaster when still overwhelmed by emergency response activities.<sup>34</sup> However, by the time the community may feel it is stabilized and prepared to engage in recovery planning, key decisions have been made that affect the long-term redevelopment of the community. Clear, implementable and timely<sup>35</sup> recovery plans provide a roadmap to recovery and serve as a tool in the recovery process.<sup>36</sup> The community must be in a position to undertake these efforts by developing its capacity and capability. Communities with reduced capacity might feel LTCR assistance comes too soon, but there are benefits to engaging as early as possible, particularly by enabling technical support specialists to identify and engage key stakeholders and government leadership, inform decision makers of possible long-term impacts and assess level of sector damage.

### **STATES SHOULD PLAN TO TAKE THE REINS OF RECOVERY –STATES OF LOUISIANA, IOWA AND MISSISSIPPI**

States can maximize federal resources post-event by acting quickly to establish a state-level recovery task force or commissions, or designating a recovery agency. Both Louisiana and Iowa established

formal coordination structures at various levels of government. Louisiana developed the Louisiana Recovery Authority, which worked to secure funding and other recovery resources, established principles and policies for future development, tracked and reported on recovery progress, and partnered with public and private entities on LTCR efforts. The Rebuild Iowa Office and the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission were established to provide state level leadership in identifying, prioritizing, and addressing short- and long-term recovery issues. This was intended to help damaged communities rebuild in a way that would make them more resistant to future disaster impacts. At the state level, both states had task forces and advisory groups focused on different sectors of recovery like housing or economic development. In Mississippi, the Governor established the state-level Commission for Recovery and Renewal which undertook a state charette process, organizing community meetings and working with local government to develop recovery projects. Mississippi requested ESF#14 LTCR assistance and the LTCR teams were able to step into the state framework for recovery, supplementing the planning expertise and assisting localities in moving recovery projects forward. States that understand the value of LTCR planning and are prepared to engage with federal resources post-disaster are primed to move forward quickly in partnering with LTCR and coordinating available resources.

## LESSON 5: PARTNERSHIPS AND ORGANIZING

Rebuilding and redeveloping a community is a large task. No single person or organization can complete all the work that will need to be done. It is critical to build partnerships that can carry out the work of recovery. These partnerships are needed at many levels including local, state, tribal, territorial, federal, private and nonprofit and across diverse sectors including housing, economic, and infrastructure. Recovery stakeholders should coordinate in order to share information, reduce duplication of effort, and develop strategic paths forward.

### ESF #14 PRINCIPLE #5

**Build Partnerships and Coordination** – Partnerships and coordination structures are the keys to long-term support and commitment. LTCR attempts to provide a neutral platform for all stakeholders to come together to build and develop these partnerships, identify needs and challenges, resolve problems and develop collaborative solutions, which will result in a more efficient and effective recovery effort. These partnerships include all levels of government, private sector, non-profit, faith based community organizations and all stakeholders in recovery. LTCR is the early catalyst and demobilizes with the expectation that these partnerships and coordination structures will continue to develop under state leadership and provide lasting benefit to community recovery as implementation progresses.

### RECOVERY STRUCTURES CREATE A PLATFORM FOR COOPERATION –STATE OF IOWA, CITY OF PALO AND WAVERLY, IA AND HANCOCK COUNTY, MS

Many states and communities have established recovery structures to coordinate and facilitate recovery efforts. These have varied from having a single point of contact to organize cabinet level agencies providing community assistance as in Kansas after the 2007 storms, to a completely new organization like the Louisiana Recovery Authority following Hurricane Katrina. At the local

A partnership between LTCR and EPA started in Greensburg, Kansas after the tornado in 2007. In the months that followed EPA worked with state and federal partners to provide technical assistance, including bringing experts to educate the community on strategies for efficient rebuilding and sustainable design. This partnership expanded to benefit more communities in Iowa in 2008. After the 2008 floods and tornadoes in Iowa, ESF#14 partnered with EPA, US Department of Agriculture, the Rebuild Iowa Office and Iowa Department of Economic Development to bring Smart Growth technical assistance to six communities. ESF #14 and EPA representatives conducted site visits to meet with local officials, tour the selected communities and determine how agency partners could collaborate to provide technical assistance to the community. EPA consultants studied local ordinances and comprehensive plans and developed policy recommendations and visual renderings of potential development scenarios. FEMA and EPA are continuing to develop and build this inter-agency partnership with the recent signing of an MOU.

level, LTCR teams helped communities that lacked coordination structures, like the town of Waverly, Iowa, to establish new stakeholder groups to bring people together. In towns like Palo, Iowa that had existing stakeholder groups, the LTCR team helped the community use those structures as a basis, and expanded on them to coordinate recovery partners and mobilize the LTCR effort. In Iowa, the LTCR

process created a platform for the Councils of Government to form stronger relationships with communities in its purview. Having a structure and a process helped at all community levels. In Escambia County, Florida, one person involved in the recovery process remarked, "While we rebuilt the community, we rebuilt neighborhood ties."

In Hancock County, Mississippi a non-governmental stakeholder - the Chamber of Commerce - became a primary driver of recovery collaboration and coordination. Initially, Hancock's government had established a county-wide recovery coordination framework. So many people wanted to champion the various recovery projects that the overall recovery process became unfocused and fragmented. The lack of a functional coordination system contributed to Bay St. Louis and Waveland breaking off from the county-wide recovery effort and pursuing their own interests without substantial coordination with other communities. The Chamber of Commerce responded to the need for cross-sector collaboration and became the hub for non-profits, the private sector, and other interested partners to work together on the recovery.

### **PARTNERSHIPS MUST BE BENEFICIAL FOR ALL INVOLVED TO ENSURE ONGOING COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION – CALCASIEU PARISH, LA**

Partnerships must be productive and worthwhile for all involved. They create a unity of purpose among those involved and ensure collaboration. The most effective way to ensure the coordination continues is to demonstrate results and progress. In Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, local universities and businesses formed lasting partnerships that have helped catalyze recovery projects. One such partnership is the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance. This alliance of business, government and private partners, along with McNeese University, established an entrepreneurial center for southwest Louisiana following Hurricane Rita. This partnership benefited all of the recovery partners, who had a shared goal of strengthening and sustaining economic activity in Southwest Louisiana.

### **IMPACTED COMMUNITIES CAN LEARN FROM THOSE WITH RECOVERY EXPERIENCE – STATE OF TEXAS, COLORADO, FLORIDA, IOWA, AND MISSISSIPPI**

As community leaders struggle to help their town rebound, many have found it useful to establish mentorship relations with communities farther



Site of the Hancock County, MS business incubator



Architectural rendering of the SEED Center at McNeese University – Calcasieu Parish, LA

along in their recovery. LTRC teams have facilitated partnerships among many communities, setting up conference calls, site visits, and video-conferences that allow frank conversations between local leaders on how to get the job done and accomplish recovery goals. In Texas, local officials from southwest counties hit by Gustav and Ike met with state and local government leaders from Colorado, Florida, Iowa and Mississippi through a video-conference arranged by the LTRC team. Topics

included next steps after completing the recovery plan, collaborating effectively with various levels of government, project development, funding and coordinating local and regional efforts. Due to the long-term nature of recovery, states and communities

a high level of community engagement post-disaster. This level of engagement can be sustained over time when local leadership and community members are committed to communication and collaboration. After flooding affected the city of Palo, the city's Storm Water Management Committee, which existed prior to the storm, saw an increase in community participation. According to the Mayor of Palo, there is "ten times more information" available to the public than before the flood, and he credited both FEMA LTRC and city staff for this change. Since flooding devastated Palo, a representative from the East Central Iowa COG indicated there has been more collaboration between the Councils of Government and the community. Local ownership of the recovery and public commitment to the process ensures that community will remain engaged. In Pensacola, Florida, where prior stakeholder engagement efforts had shown that the "community can be its own worst enemy," the LTRC team was relied upon to "neutrally" facilitate coordination and collaboration. Pensacola had many projects on the docket due to Florida's comprehensive planning requirements, and stakeholders saw the recovery process as an opportunity to come up with new ideas and push agendas. Consequently, the LTRC team was asked by the city to help negotiate projects and ensure that public, private, and non-profit sector partners had specific roles in coordinating with each other. Many residents of Pensacola felt like the recovery process helped mend local relationships.



Video-teleconference held in Texas with peer communities hit by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike



Greensburg recovery team members on a site visit to learn about redevelopment in Hutchinson, Kansas

with prior experience can be invaluable in providing real-world counsel and advice to those in the early stages of recovery.

**THE LONG-TERM RECOVERY PROCESS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REINVIGORATE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COLLABORATION – PALO, IA, AND PENSACOLA, FL**

The LTRC process involves stakeholder outreach, community meetings and workshops that can lead to

**BOTH IMPACTED COMMUNITIES AND POTENTIAL FUNDERS ARE REQUIRED TO CATALYZE RECOVERY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – SPIRIT LAKE NATION, ND, STATE OF IOWA, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**

While identifying potential funding sources for recovery projects is beneficial, communities sometimes find the process of navigating funding regulations and restrictions to be overwhelming. LTRC has incorporated a stronger federal coordination component in assisting disaster-impacted communities. In North Dakota, LTRC team members convened over fifty federal officials in Bismarck so they could be informed of recovery challenges faced by the Spirit Lake Tribal Nation (SLN) after flooding in 2010. SLN recovery committee members will continue to work with federal agencies to get their expertise in how best to use existing

program funds to implement tribal recovery projects, which best practices to incorporate in recovery projects, and to build local capacity to sustain recovery efforts long term.

In Iowa, following the 2008 floods, LTRC and the State of Iowa worked together to form the Iowa Inter-Agency Coordination Team (IACT). This forum brought together federal and state partners to coordinate and to hear directly from the community about their needs and priorities. This was followed by multiple discussions among communities and potential funders, to identify ways to successfully implement these strategies. In Mississippi, following Hurricane Katrina, federal program representatives were brought in to consult with county and municipal leaders in roundtable forums. Each of the five highly impacted counties had one all-day meeting to receive personalized attention on their recovery issues, pose questions on funding eligibility and inquire about potential funding for a variety of projects.



Tribal recovery committee and federal interagency members work in small groups to discuss implementation of key projects



FEMA Deputy Regional Administrator Doug Gore and Tribal Chairwoman Myra Pearson, sign a memorandum of concurrence to work together with federal partners to implement the Spirit Lake Nation recovery plan



## LESSON 6: LEADERSHIP AND CONSISTENCY

Consistent and ongoing efforts are critical to the progress of recovery. A recovery plan is only the first step in successfully rebounding from a disaster. It will require years of dedicated hard work and resources to fully design, manage, and implement the projects that catalyze recovery. Sustained recovery leadership has been provided by city departments, task force chairs, private citizens, and people specifically hired to serve as Recovery Managers.

### NEW AND VARIED LOCAL LEADERSHIP MAY EMERGE AS RECOVERY MOVES FORWARD –STATE OF TEXAS, STATE OF FLORIDA, PALO, IA AND GREENSBURG, KS

Often government officials take a leadership role during recovery, but there are many examples of other citizens stepping forward to lead the community's recovery effort. In Palo, Iowa the local greenhouse owners supported and actively engaged in the LTRC process, even offering space at their business for LTRC community meetings. In Texas, Kansas, Florida and other communities, religious leaders spoke about recovery efforts and galvanized support of their congregations. Through the Public Square process undertaken during the recovery efforts in Greensburg, Kansas, community members who were not previously active in civic projects joined the recovery process and assumed leadership roles. Community members expressed their surprise and appreciation at the willingness and dedication of neighbors to lead recovery efforts, especially among those who were not traditionally engaged in civic activities.

### ONGOING MANAGEMENT AND A DEDICATED SOURCE OF LEADERSHIP FOR RECOVERY EFFORTS MAINTAINS MOMENTUM – GAYS MILLS, WI

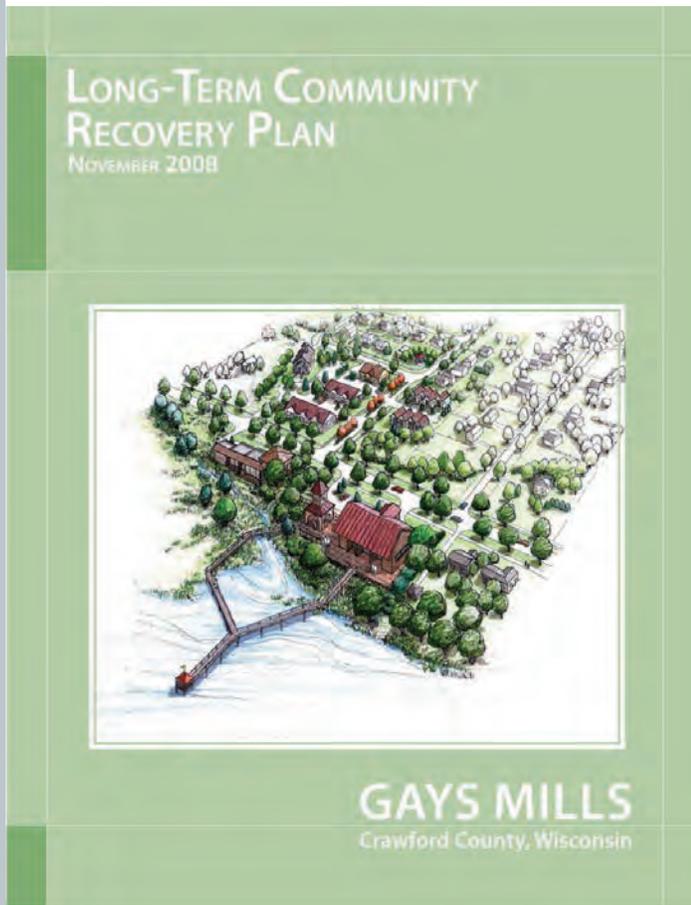
The implementation of recovery strategies and plans generally requires a dedicated recovery staff and/or the provision of long-term technical assistance. Despite the vital importance of Recovery Managers to the process of "building back better," funding for these new positions is always a challenge. No single grant currently funds this role. Gays Mills, WI funded their Flood Recovery Manager through a creative mix

## ESF #14 PRINCIPLE #6

**Engage the Community** – LTRC believes that in order for recovery to take place, the local community and all of its stakeholders and populations must be vested in the process. The community is made up of a diverse group of individuals and organizations that together form the whole. Public participation in the recovery process ensures broad support and collaboration and makes use of local knowledge and resources. Formal and informal leaders in the community are vital to success, however the residents must shape the path to recovery in order to support and implement the key steps. The way this engagement takes place adapts to community needs, but is always an element of recovery.

of Health and Human Services (HHS) Social Service Block Grants and EDA grants. Midwest states have routinely turned to EDA for this type of support, while Bolivar Peninsula in Texas received assistance from Galveston County to support a Recovery Manager. The difficulty in identifying funding has caused gaps between the departure of an LTRC Team and the Recovery Manager beginning work, slowing the momentum of recovery. However, when this person has come aboard, he or she is generally able to rebuild momentum and push forward recovery projects and initiatives.

The main responsibilities of a Recovery Manager are to help the community implement the recovery projects identified in the plan and help the community be stronger and healthier. Having a single person or office ultimately responsible for recovery implementation creates a lasting center of gravity for recovery-related activities. Having a Flood Recovery Manager has allowed Gays Mills to successfully pursue grants from various state and federal partners, purchase tracts of land identified in the LTRC Plan to relocate the flood ravaged portion of the community, procure design services for its relocated community center and village hall, partner with the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission to conduct comprehensive



Long-Term Community Recovery Plan – Gays Mills, WI

planning, work with the Wisconsin Department of roads to slow traffic down near the relocation site to make the new town pedestrian friendly, and provide business development support to locally owned companies. Recovery Managers can also be community builders. For example, the flood recovery manager writes weekly columns in the local paper to promote the type of community established in the Gays Mills LTRC vision statement. The topics discussed range from economic growth to eco-tourism. Overall, the Gays Mills Recovery Manager has helped the community move forward 12 out of 17 projects identified in the LTRC Plan.

**SUPPORT NEEDS TO BE TRANSITIONED OUT GRADUALLY WITH DELIBERATION, NOT RAPIDLY OR WITHOUT A STRATEGY FOR SUCCESSFUL ONGOING EFFORTS—STATE OF LOUISIANA, ESCAMBIA, FL, PALO AND IOWA CITY, IA**

Much like Recovery Managers, LTRC teams generally boost community capacity to accelerate the recovery process. Regardless of whether a team is in a community four weeks or four years, abrupt departures make it difficult for the community to maintain momentum without disruption. In Louisiana, in early 2006, the disaster leadership decided to demobilize LTRC teams with only a few weeks of notice to communities and the state. It was difficult to provide communities with the training and capacity building they needed to use the recovery tools and plans developed to guide recovery. Calcasieu Parish officials expressed their desire for help with recovery implementation and connecting projects with resources. While a follow-on office was established at the Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office, it had a much more focused mission than the initial long-term recovery operation.

In Florida, Escambia county officials recalled the transition being difficult because it happened too quickly and prematurely, with the effect that “everyone went back to their silos and there was no collaboration and coordination.” In the case of Florida, a continuing onslaught of storms and increasing number of communities in need made it challenging for the LTRC team to continue dedicated support. While FEMA tried to hire Recovery Managers to support the next phase of re-development, internal challenges with the hiring process continued to make it difficult to provide the ideal level of support to impacted communities.

In contrast, after the Midwest floods in 2008, towns like Palo and Iowa City continued to receive technical assistance once the LTRC planning phase was complete, which helped sustain the momentum of recovery. In Palo, LTRC provided on-the-ground support for 12 weeks then departed in December. Following the departure, LTRC developed additional tools that would help the community recover,

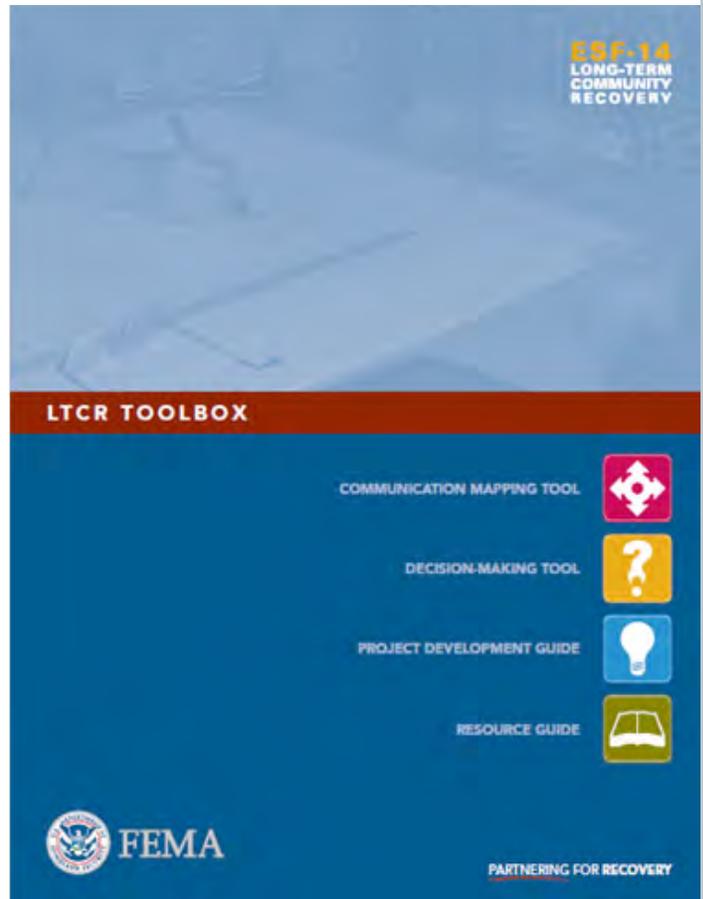
and then returned in February 2009 for a series of workshops to increase local capacity to implement recovery strategies. The LTRC tools included a Decision Making Tool and Project Development Tool to help delineate specific steps to take. In Waverly, EPA began providing Smart Growth Assistance on the heels of the LTRC's departure, providing continuity of technical assistance. The smooth transition was further supported by the state and region's recovery capacities. The Council of Government took a strong role in supporting communities, and the State, using EDA grants, funded recovery liaison positions that allowed for connectivity between various levels of government. These efforts to sustain momentum and gradually transition LTRC support benefitted these Iowa communities.

**TARGETED FOLLOW UP AND SUPPORT CAN REINVIGORATE AND REFOCUS EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM HOWEVER, SUSTAINING EFFORTS MUST BE UNDERTAKEN LOCALLY - BOLIVAR PENINSULA AND CHAMBERS COUNTY, TX**

Abrupt departures of recovery support can negatively impact the pace of recovery. LTRC has increasingly focused on developing Transition Plans with a community, and providing implementation support when necessary. In Texas, for example, the LTRC team demobilized in May 2009 after facilitating development of the Bolivar Blueprint, which outlined goals and objectives, and the Chambers County Long-Term Community Recovery Plan, which documented the ideas and strategies developed by the community. After the team demobilized, recovery on Bolivar Peninsula and in Chambers County stagnated.

In October, Galveston County hired a recovery coordinator who utilized the LTRC Toolkit to re-engage the community in the recovery process. Approximately one month later, LTRC deployed two team members to provide technical assistance to the Blueprint Director. This effort led to the Bolivar Blueprint Recovery Plan. Upon the request of the County, LTRC was redeployed later in 2010 and assisted the community in establishing a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation (Peninsula Development Coalition, PenDeCo) that would take the lead in implementation recovery project funding and management. As one of their first efforts, PenDeCo

held a Community Resource Fair where the non-profit board members and other residents met with representatives from nearly 20 local, state, and federal agencies and NGOs.



ESF #14 LTRC ToolBox created for the 2008 Iowa disaster

To date, PenDeCo and the Blueprint Steering Committee are working on recovery projects including bank stabilization along the Intracoastal Waterway, master planning for parks and tourism and managing HMGP buy-out properties. PenDeCo is a consortium partner with H-GAC<sup>37</sup> which recently received a \$3.75 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from US Department of Transportation, HUD, and the EPA. The targeted support from ESF #14 allowed the community to continue working towards recovery and benefitting from additional capacity at critical times.

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## LESSON 7: ROLE OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT

Actively engaged state governments are better able to maximize federal resources and establish the credibility of a collaborative recovery process with local communities impacted by a disaster. States with well established relationships with local government officials and key recovery stakeholders are generally able to easily introduce concepts and technical support to communities, to accelerate the process of community engagement, and propel the momentum of recovery. The state is a critical partner for LTCR to establish relationships, and build trust and credibility with the local community.

### THE STATE IS A VITAL LEADER IN BUILDING TRUST AND DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP- STATE OF TEXAS, STATE OF IOWA

Local leaders are more likely to embrace the LTCR process when it is presented in partnership with state government. In Texas following Hurricane Ike, LTCR spoke with five counties to make an offer of LTCR assistance. One of the communities felt they would not benefit from the LTCR process, resulting in only four partnerships to develop and launch a recovery planning process. Offers of assistance came from the LTCR leadership directly to the community with the state's agreement.

A more deliberate approach was used in Iowa after the 2008 floods. The State of Iowa's Rebuild Iowa Office and LTCR jointly went to community leaders to discuss the options for assistance. Convening a joint meeting with all levels of government demonstrated a unity of effort that establishes the legitimacy of the assistance. When LTCR does not have prior experience working with local communities, it is more effective and there is a greater chance for successful support when the state can serve as a partner, provide introductions and help guide recovery resources and an engagement strategy.

## Why is Coordination Important?

If a community's hospital is underinsured and destroyed by a disaster, who do they turn to for help? DHS, Health and Human Services? FEMA's Public Assistance Program? The Department of Housing and Urban Development? EPA's Smart Growth Program? Department of Energy? Depending on the circumstances, the answer could be any or all of the above. However, "none of the above" coordinate their technical assistance and resources unless they are asked to do so. It is important to know what kinds of federal government expertise can be applied to help disaster-impacted communities.

*NOAA: Assess damage and economic impacts to fishing ports, infrastructure, fishing vessels, recreational fisheries, and other coastal economic issues. Conduct Needs Analysis. Provides technical assistance in rebuilding efforts that support long-term sustainability and resilience of the fisheries and communities to future disasters. Assist in mitigating long-term coastal and human health impacts.*

*USDA Rural Development (RD), Business and Cooperative Development Loan and Grant Programs: This program works in partnership with the private sector and community-based organizations to provide financial assistance and business planning. It also helps fund projects that create or preserve quality jobs and/or promote a clean rural environment.*

*HHS: Conduct impact analysis and needs assessment of damages to public social welfare facilities/institutes (orphanages, homes for the aged, rehabilitation centers for the mentally or physically disabled, and other facilities for drug addicts, prostitutes and the destitute).*

*EDA: The Local Technical Assistance Program helps fill the knowledge and information gaps that may prevent leaders in the public and nonprofit sectors in economically distressed regions from making optimal decisions on local economic development issues.*

*DOE: The Electric Markets Technical Assistance Program responds to both immediate and long-term needs of states, regions, and other organizations to implement policy and market solutions that bring about improved demand response, energy efficiency, renewable energy, and transmission utilization.*

# LOUISIANA SPEAKS

Our Voice. Our Plan. Our Future.

LOUISIANA LONG-TERM RECOVERY PLANNING



FEMA

**ESF #14**  
LONG-TERM COMMUNITY RECOVERY

Partnership between LRA and FEMA ESF #14 LTCR



FEMA, State and local officials in Port Charlotte discuss recovery planning and mitigation issues

## STATE PARTNERSHIP AND INVESTMENT IN LTCR BUILDS CREDIBILITY OF THE PROCESS WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES- STATES OF FLORIDA, IOWA, MISSISSIPPI, AND LOUISIANA

In Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Iowa, State-level officials introduced the LTCR teams to local and county officials, validating the role of ESF #14 in the state's overall recovery strategy. In Louisiana, the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) introduced LTCR leadership to local leaders, non-governmental organizations, and other recovery stakeholders at a large meeting in Jennings, and explained the type of assistance that would be provided as part of the state's overall strategic approach to recovery. The LRA also committed one State National Guard member to work with each community-based LTCR office. In Mississippi, Governor Haley Barbour requested the activation of LTCR and integrated the teams into the on-going recovery charette process. Iowa took an even more proactive approach to supporting and engaging the LTCR teams. In the spirit of partnership, the state established the Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) and with LTCR support, deployed RIO liaisons to work with each flooded region, and met jointly with LTCR teams and affected jurisdictions to adapt the level of support to the capacity of each community. In addition, the state successfully encouraged the participation of its Councils of Government in the LTCR process.



The Greensburg Water Tower rebuilt after the 2007 tornado

## LESSON 8: FEDERAL OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT

While communities drive recovery, the federal government can complement state, tribal, territorial and local governments and the private and non-profit sectors, by using its programs, expertise, and convening authority. ESF #14 was established to bring together federal expertise and programs to assist a community and support coordination between all stakeholders who can contribute to recovery. The examples in this report demonstrate that LTCR can support a community's recovery, and many lessons have emerged to improve federal recovery operations and support to communities.

### WELL COORDINATED FEDERAL ASSISTANCE, EASILY UNDERSTOOD AND ACCESSED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACHIEVES THE GREATEST IMPACT - GREENSBURG, KS, STATE OF GEORGIA AND STATE OF TEXAS

Within the federal government is a range of capabilities to assist states, tribes, territories and communities in recovery of the built, natural, economic and social environment after a disaster. The Department of Energy provides technical assistance with energy efficiency and weatherization. NOAA supports coastal zone management and habitat restoration. The EDA assists economic assessments and regional planning. The Corporation for Community and National Service provides Vista and AmeriCorps Volunteers to help build community recovery capacity and address social challenges. If each department, agency or program individually approached a disaster-impacted community, then confusion and inefficiency would be likely. In the immediacy of a disaster, local governments are often unable to process offers of assistance or position themselves to make the best use of this help. LTCR has attempted to assist with this coordination function with varying degrees of success. In Cobb County, Georgia, LTCR partnered with HUD and state agencies to offer local homeowners expert assistance on the mortgage and foreclosure issues they faced after suffering flood impacts. In Greensburg, KS, successful interagency coordination and collaboration allowed the creative use of funding from multiple sources. Funding from FEMA, USDA-RD, State of Kansas, Rotary Club and South Central Community Foundation was leveraged to rebuild the water tower. The capacity of the new water tower was doubled to help attract new business to the area. It served as a model of working together for future investment.

In contrast, after Hurricane Ike, President Bush signed HR 2638 allocating \$21.3 billion for Emergency Supplemental appropriations. More than seven agencies received funding to assist with disaster recovery, each with different application deadlines and funding timelines. None were aligned or sequenced to the work with the communities' process for identifying and implementing their recovery vision and plan.



Central Water Reclamation Facility, Escambia County, FL

**RECOVERY LEADERSHIP SHOULD STRIVE TO MOBILIZE AND SUSTAIN INTERAGENCY COORDINATION - STATE OF TEXAS, SPIRIT LAKE NATION, ND, SANTA ROSA, FL, GREENSBURG, KS, AND STATE OF IOWA**

After most large disasters, FEMA, as the coordinator for ESF #14, has worked with state and local counterparts to establish working groups or task forces to create interagency and cross-sector collaboration on issues including housing, health and social services, economic revitalization, environmental protection and restoration. After the 2008 Midwest Floods, Iowa created the Interagency Coordination Team (IACT). For Hurricane Ike and Gustav, Texas established a coordination initiative with more than 60 participating entities. In 2010, the Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota had Tribal Recovery Working Groups focused on multiple sectors. These coordination forums have resulted in disaster-wide impact assessments (e.g. Hurricane Ike Impact Report), recovery plans and strategies, and creative partnerships to fund community recovery projects. Those partnerships include the Waste Water Treatment plant in Santa Rosa Florida, a Master Plan for Greensburg funded by USDA Rural Development, local capacity building for Smart Growth through EPA, Recovery Managers through EDA, and rebuilding through CNCS AmeriCorps. In Iowa City, EPA Smart Growth consultants and the LTCR Team focused on the Riverfront Crossing District in Iowa City. The city expressed interest in sustainable development options for this area based on existing ordinances and an analysis of the market for residential and mixed-use development. The EPA consultant team delivered a report that included visual renderings of the riverfront district, a market overview and policy options. Iowa City capitalized on the assistance available and sustained the partnership with EPA to achieve its long-term priorities. These efforts would not have been possible without ongoing interagency coordination and collaboration.



Iowa Inter-Agency Coordination Team (IACT) Meeting Cover

### COORDINATING FEDERAL INFORMATION AND EFFORTS IS MOST PRODUCTIVE WITHIN AN ESTABLISHED SYSTEM - NASHVILLE, TN, STATE OF ALABAMA

Senior leadership across all relevant agencies must take an active and engaged role and work together to more effectively deliver assistance. In Tennessee, after the Nashville floods, a senior Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) led the LTCR teams through the impact assessment phase of the disaster and coordinated the participation of federal agencies in ESF #14's Recovery Support Functions (RSFs). The RSFs were organized by sector, allowing federal agencies to work collaboratively and share information with other agencies with a similar mission. This effort was helpful for understanding the depth and breadth of the disaster impacts, but it required a single coordination point to be successful. This approach was similar to the Hurricane Ike Impact Report from the inter-agency team working with the State of Texas. Without that central system for organizing and coordinating, each department would follow its own path, which could result in gaps or a duplication of effort.

In Alabama, an FDRC was deployed and all six Recovery Support Functions (RSFs) were activated to address the following functional areas: Health and Social Services, Housing, Natural and Cultural Resources, Community Planning and Capacity Building, Infrastructure Systems, and Economics.

The FDRC worked with the State to establish a companion structure at the state level. The Governor issued an Executive Order designating the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) to be the State agency lead for LTCR. With the six RSFs fully operational, 12 federal agency partners were engaged (six through Mission Assignments) to identify support and assistance, both immediate and long-term, for affected communities.

ESF #14 was also able to engage the Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) that serve the communities where LTCR technical assistance teams were deployed. LTCR teams worked with the



Federal interagency staff evaluating post-recovery challenges at Tennessee JFO

appropriate RPCs to assure continuity and consistency in long-term community planning, with the objective of the RPCs continue a lead role with ADECA when LTCR teamwork is completed. The Economic Development Administration provided \$500,000 in grants to the five RPCs in the most heavily impacted areas to support economic recovery planning and capacity needs.

### THE FEDERAL RESPONSE TO RECOVERY SHOULD BE LED BY A SENIOR LEVEL RECOVERY OFFICIAL –STATE OF TENNESSEE, STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

A senior level federal recovery leader is needed to manage the federal effort throughout the entire recovery process. In order to maintain focus and direction throughout the recovery phase, a single coordination point is required. Following the spring floods in Tennessee in 2010, a senior level FCO served in this role during this initial phase of recovery. Senior level recovery leadership should be ongoing throughout the entire recovery process, long after the disaster response is complete. Recovery organizing at the federal level has met with challenges in both authority and responsibility. In Mississippi four years after Hurricane Katrina, the Governor's Office reacted to the difficulties in moving projects forward when multiple agencies, requirements and timelines were involved. The vacuum of a senior federal recovery leader was filled,

and federal assistance has become more effective due to this project-level coordination.

The experiences of the states, tribes, territories and communities Involved in Long-Term Community Recovery provide solid examples of how recovery support can catalyze and supplement existing resources and knowledge. There should be continued efforts to strengthen preparedness planning, coordinate resources post-event, and empower communities, in order to maximize the time and resources of those providing recovery support and to enable communities to successfully implement long-term recovery plans.

## PART 3: GUIDANCE FOR THE FUTURE

The newly released *National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF)* is an opportunity to implement an integrated recovery system that builds on the lessons learned through ESF #14 LTCR community recovery efforts. By drawing on these experiences, and the national doctrine established in the NDRF, all levels of government can develop strategies and partnerships to more effectively organize and coordinate recovery support to restore, redevelop and revitalize communities impacted by disasters.

This section contains the actions and strategies that ESF #14 LTCR has found to be most critical to fully realizing the NDRF's potential and to bolstering the nation's ability to rebound from complex disasters.

### 1. Build capacity of all recovery partners including government, private and nonprofit sectors to successfully implement recovery concepts identified in the NDRF

All stakeholders and partners must have the ability, knowledge and skills to implement recovery. Without that capacity and the ability to use resources in a timely and appropriate manner, the window of opportunity could be missed. This can be addressed by training, exercises, planning in advance for recovery and establishing systems at all levels. Actions include:

- Create stronger partnerships and clarify roles with and among federal, state, tribal, territorial and local governments in the disaster recovery process, to enable more effective management and support to communities.
- Ensure resources and expectations are developed to enhance recovery capacities at the local level, balancing resources to support ALL facets of a well planned and managed recovery.
- Enhance local government capacity to operate and manage all disaster recovery functions, while beginning recovery planning. This includes development of mutual aid resources

and processes to support the range of recovery capacities needed.

- Assist states to develop programs providing capacity assistance to local governments for recovery management and recovery planning.
- Encourage information sharing and collaboration between communities with prior disaster recovery experience and those in the process of recovery, to capitalize on lessons and experiences of other jurisdictions and provide for peer-to-peer mentoring.
- Ensure federal capacity is in place before disasters, to enable joint problem solving with states, tribes, territories and communities on recovery strategies and addressing program limitations.
- Develop federal partners' capabilities to interact in a collaborative, hands-on way with states and local governments during recovery planning and in development of complex recovery and implementation projects.



Carlos Monje, White House Domestic Policy Council, discusses the NDRF during a meeting with national level organizations, December 2009

**2. Prepare for recovery by developing pre-disaster plans and guidance.**

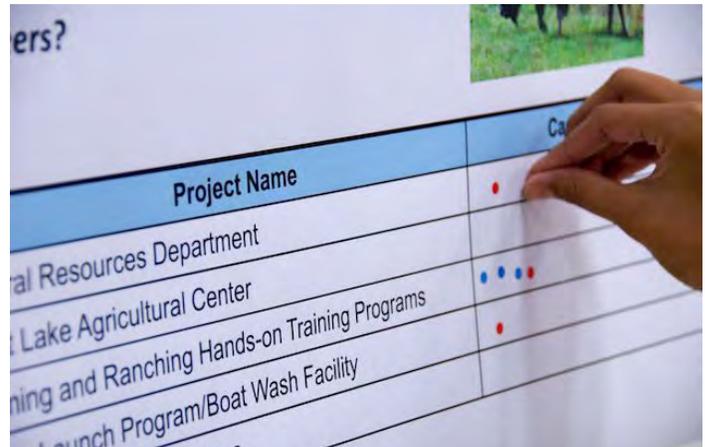
Developing plans and strategies for recovery prior to a disaster allows stakeholders to identify their roles and responsibilities and to establish key processes for post-disaster recovery. This results in a more fully prepared and resilient community that can quickly and effectively address the challenges of recovery. Actions include:

- Ensure that states, tribal, territorial and local governments have developed and have in place a pre-disaster plan to structure and define how recovery coordination, decision making, prioritization and planning will occur after a disaster.
- Build capability across functional areas within state, tribal, territorial and local governments to ensure that recovery planning is fully integrated into other significant planning that can benefit recovery, including housing, economic development, land-use, comprehensive, and hazard mitigation planning.
- Integrate hazard mitigation principles into all community planning and land use guidance and strategies.

**3. Encourage and support local ownership, leadership and management of the recovery process**

Recovery must be owned at the local level for it to be successful. There should be a concerted effort to build leadership and capacity in communities that lack this or have compromised capacity as a result of the disaster. Local involvement and leadership provides continuity, encourages trust in the process and further encourages participation and investment in recovery for all stakeholders. Actions include:

- Support ongoing capacity building through development of tools and resources that assist communities prepare for any future disaster events and establish dedicated recovery management capabilities at the local level.



Spirit Lake Nation LTCR Meeting



Washington Parish, LA LTCR Meeting

- Encourage development of recovery leadership and decision-making bodies at all levels with the ability and authority to convene decision makers and other leaders.
- Work with local leaders to foster community participation and collaboration in establishing priorities and a vision for recovery to ensure vested interest in a successful outcome and shared responsibility for decision making throughout the process.
- Foster open communication and transparency to manage public expectations and encourage participation in recovery activities. Working

together towards a common set of goals can accelerate the process.

**4. Foster and strengthen connectivity between all stakeholders to more effectively leverage recovery resources**

Federal, state, tribal, territorial and local recovery assistance processes must be better integrated to increase the speed, efficiency, and ability to provide support to communities most in need. Developing a system that allows everyone to bring their knowledge and resources together, including residents, business owners, nonprofit organizations, local leaders, and government resources, provides a forum for leveraging resources and expediting recovery. Actions include:

- Encourage states to more fully prepare for disaster recovery by developing an organizational structure for disaster recovery, inclusive of all state agencies, that can effectively coordinate and facilitate recovery planning and capacity support for local community leadership, identify and resolve gaps, conflicts and inefficiencies among agency policy and funding processes.
- Develop adequate mechanisms to support states, tribes, territories and local governments in building networks for coordination and collaboration and technical assistance.
- Ensure adequate forums, through RSFs, to allow for the wide variety of non-governmental and private sector recovery partners to participate in recovery operations, issue and resource coordination
- Ensure consistent participation of federal government personnel to support recovery efforts and manage expectations of state, tribe, territory and local communities.



Pass Christian, MS LTRC Meeting



Spirit Lake Nation LTRC Meeting

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- <sup>11</sup> United States. Federal Emergency Management Agency. "The Road to Recovery 2008, Emergency Support Function #14, Long-Term Community Recovery". August 2009. Print.
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- <sup>13</sup> This process is described in detailed in the LTRC Self Help Guide.
- <sup>14</sup> United States. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Recovery Planning in Louisiana:18 Months Along. April 2007. Print.
- <sup>15</sup> Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning Guide for Communities. Florida Department of Community Affairs. October, 2010. Pages 5. 15. 38, 113. Pre-ESF #14 LTRC support in Port Charlotte, Arcadia and other FL counties was used as a model, along with the LTRC Self Help Guide, for elements of the PDRP planning process. See [www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/PDRP/](http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/PDRP/)
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- <sup>21</sup> United States. Federal Emergency Management Agency. Recovery Planning in Louisiana:18 Months Along. April 2007. Print.
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- <sup>23</sup> Calcasieu Parish Long-Term Community Recovery Plan, 2006. <http://www.louisianaspeaks-parishplans.org/IndParishHomepage.cfm?EntID=4>
- <sup>24</sup> Kansas Communities, LLC has changed to Public Square Communities, LLC since their work with Greensburg, Kansas in 2007.
- <sup>25</sup> "The "Public Square" process is a comprehensive development approach that focuses on asset-based conversation, citizen engagement and partnerships among leaders in Business, Education, Health + Community Services and Government. These four sectors comprise the Public Square." Greensburg + Kiowa County Long-Term Community Recovery Plan, August 2007.
- <sup>26</sup> SunChips brand is part of Frito-Lay North America, a division of PepsiCo.
- <sup>27</sup> The Palo Long-Term Community Recovery Strategy can be accessed at [http://www.rio.iowa.gov/community\\_recovery/index.html](http://www.rio.iowa.gov/community_recovery/index.html)
- <sup>28</sup> Waverly Long-Term Community Recovery Strategy can be accessed at [http://www.rio.iowa.gov/community\\_recovery/index.html](http://www.rio.iowa.gov/community_recovery/index.html)
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- <sup>31</sup> Louisiana Speaks website - [http://www.louisianaspeaks-parishplans.org/PlanningProcess\\_LouisianaSpeaks.cfm](http://www.louisianaspeaks-parishplans.org/PlanningProcess_LouisianaSpeaks.cfm)
- <sup>32</sup> See FEMA website for tools and guidance.
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- <sup>35</sup> Emphasis added.
- <sup>36</sup> GAO, Disaster Recovery: Past Experiences Offer Insights for Recovering from Hurricanes Ike and Gustav and Other Recent Natural Disasters, GAO-08-1120 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 26, 2008).
- <sup>37</sup> H-GAC – Houston-Galveston Area Council - H-GAC's mission is to serve as the instrument of local government cooperation, promoting the region's orderly development and the safety and welfare of its citizens. [h-gac.com](http://h-gac.com)

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