

# MAINTAINING AN EQUITY LENS

There is a growing awareness that equity is not equality, focusing more specifically on fairness and justice. While not all inequities can be identified and eliminated, organizations can view all aspects of their disaster response and recovery with an equity lens. This simply process of asking the right questions before, during, and after response and recovery keeps equity issues at the forefront and can help organizations get to a place where equity is built into all disaster relief processes, systems, and programs.



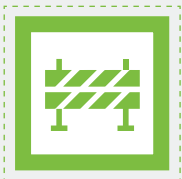
## COUNTERING MISTRUST

- How have you worked to establish trust in the community?
- What relationships do you have with community leaders and faith-based organizations?
- Do volunteers reflect the community they are serving?
- How do you integrate into the community during blue skies?



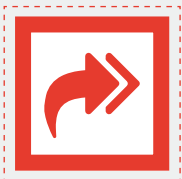
## ADDRESSING COMPOUNDED POVERTY

- Have there been other disasters in recent weeks, months, or years?
- What other challenges has this community faced?
- How do past challenges affect those currently affected?



## COUNTERING POLITICAL STEERS

- Are there political steers within the community? To whom does this provide an advantage? A disadvantage?
- How do you operate within them and still accomplish goals?
- How can we set clear expectations about what services we can provide, how much funding is available, and how many people can be helped?



## EXAMINING THE CRITERIA FOR RESPONSE

- What are your determining factors for entering a community?
- Do these factors discount communities that need help?



## ASSESSMENTS

- Have you collected data on the community in which you provide services?
- Have you assessed your recruitment, application, and retention policies and practices?



## ACCESS TO SERVICES

- Is there internet connection that recipients have access to?
- Is there phone service?
- Do you have hours outside 9 – 5?
- Are your services provided in multiple languages?
- Do you have translators available in person? Online? Over the phone?
- Is your physical space accessible to those with functional needs?
- Is it available? If so, who can access it if so? If not, can you provide alternate methods, or go to where recipients are?



## BASIC NEEDS

- Is there childcare available for those accessing services?
- Is there adequate power in the community for heating/cooling?
- Is the community's shelter accessible for everyone?
- Are you offering culturally appropriate foods?
- Do recipients need foods they can prepare without power?
- Do you provide appropriate linkages to mental health services and support groups?
- Are your mental health connections culturally appropriate?