

## G 04: INCORPORATE MIGRANTS IN PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEMS



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### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Accounting for migrants' presence and characteristics in disaster preparedness and response frameworks can promote resilience in the event of a conflict or natural disaster. Clear provisions on migrant eligibility for assistance, for example, promotes certainty. If the presence of migrants is not known or not adequately incorporated in planning, migrants can be overlooked in subsequent responses. If stakeholders fail to appreciate factors that make migrants vulnerable, such as language barriers, isolated working conditions, irregular immigration status, or mistrust of authorities, responses may be ineffective in reaching migrants.

Migrants themselves and civil society may be in the best position to assist relevant actors to appreciate migrants' presence and needs, therefore their active involvement in crisis prevention and response can be helpful.

Migrants can also contribute to preparedness and emergency response with their capacities, skills and resources. Their language abilities, first-hand knowledge of migrant populations, and understanding of cultural norms can be leveraged to create more effective responses.

#### Lessons from the Firestorms in San Diego County (2007)

In 2007, devastating wildfires engulfed 368,316 acres and destroyed 1,751 homes and businesses in San Diego County. During, and immediately following the firestorms, migrant farmworkers, mostly Latino, faced multiple barriers and were unable to access appropriate relief services, which caused disproportionate suffering. Most emergency service providers lacked the necessary cultural and linguistic competency to communicate appropriately with migrants. Farmworkers and migrants were unaware of emergency relief services and procedures to solicit assistance and did not receive adequate information about emergency relief eligibility criteria. Moreover, the presence of law enforcement personnel such as Border Control agents in the affected areas created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation for many migrants. Fear of detention hampered migrants' participation as volunteers in response efforts. Further obstacles were encountered when trying to access recovery assistance, as migrants were more often unaware of services and procedures due to language barriers or insufficient communication.

# INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS IN PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## HOST STATES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Including migrants in national and subnational frameworks for prevention, preparedness and emergency response reduces migrants' vulnerability and can increase the capacity of migrants and host communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from crises. Migrants' inclusion entails proactive measures such as mapping and engaging with migrant organizations working on preparedness and emergency response, engaging with consular posts of migrants' States of origin, engaging migrants in local-level crisis planning and management, and allocating sufficient resources for these activities. Host States should recognize migrants as a group with specific needs, and prohibit discrimination in the provision of life-saving assistance and emergency services based on nationality, immigration status and other characteristics.

### [EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, Council of Europe](#)

The Council of Europe, through its EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, is promoting improvements in emergency planning, disaster response and risk mitigation for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The EUR-OPA Member States have adopted the [Recommendation 2016 – 1](#) on the Inclusion of Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Disaster Preparedness and Response. The Member States are now invited to integrate specialised measures on migrants, asylum seekers and refugees into their national disaster risk reduction policies, training curricula and emergency management, favouring investment in long-term strategies to reduce the vulnerability and exposure to disaster of these specific groups.

### [Emergency Preparedness Plan for Farmworker Communities in San Diego, United States](#)

The Farmworker CARE Coalition is a collaborative of farmworkers, agencies and community based organizations dedicated to improving the living and working conditions of agricultural workers, mostly Latino migrants, in northern San Diego County, California. Following the 2007 wildfires in San Diego, the Coalition committed to creating an emergency plan specific to this community. Vista Community Clinic commissioned the National Latino Research Center at California State University-San Marcos to draft a preparedness plan to be implemented and shared among coalition agencies in collaboration with local governmental and private agencies working in emergency preparedness and response.

# INCORPORATING MIGRANTS INTO THEMATIC GUIDANCE AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

## MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Migrants should be factored into specific guidance materials dedicated to the protection of particular groups, such as women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, and victims of trafficking. Incorporating references to migrants in already existing tools and guidance and developing crisis-related communication tools to reach out to migrants before and during crisis, including messaging toolkits with messages translated into migrants' languages, can be effective ways of doing so.

### [Disaster Preparedness in Migrant Communities: A Manual for First Responders, LIRS](#)

This manual shares the lessons Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has learned in its history and provides communities and agencies with tools to incorporate that learning into a new or existing disaster plan. It includes observations about the characteristics of newcomers in American communities, and how those relate to their ability to cope with disaster, questions for reflection on how to best build ties with newcomer community leaders and plan for their inclusion in disaster planning as well as tools to round out planning for all stages of coping with disasters as well as questions for all stages of coping with disasters.

### [Guidelines for Emergency Management in CALD Communities, Australia](#)

Developed by Emergency Management Australia (EMA), these guidelines are aimed to provide emergency management agencies and planning committees with practical guidance in providing appropriate, responsive, accessible and sustainable services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities in the country. Each chapter includes key questions to consider in relation to engaging CALD communities and provides guidance, strategies and contacts for further support or information. Case studies have been used to illustrate good practice in effective CALD engagement in emergency management.

# CONSULTATION ON PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Consultations in which all groups can voice their concerns and highlight needs build trust between authorities, local communities and migrants, ensure that the needs of both local communities and migrants are known, and provide opportunities to work together on approaches and solutions. This may be done by hosting dedicated public meetings, setting up physical or virtual discussion spaces with broad accessibility, and ensuring the participation of all groups, for example by providing translation, by minimizing costs of participation, and by engaging migrant leaders who can meaningfully speak to and for their communities.

### [Project Red, Australia](#)

Project Red is a research consultation project of the Australian National Emergency Management Programme, undertaken with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds on volunteering in the emergency management sector. The Centre for Multicultural Youth was commissioned to undertake this consultation. The project report showed that there was much good will among young people in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities to be involved in volunteering, particularly if their involvement contributed to the safety of their communities. They saw themselves as having an important role in communicating essential information to their parents and to recently arrived community members.

### [Engaging with CALD Communities in Times of Disaster, New Zealand](#)

Following the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes in New Zealand, local and central government agencies acknowledged they were not engaging effectively with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. Consultations and research were undertaken, intended to identify recommendations to communicate with CALD communities during and in the aftermath of crises. Literature review and interviews with community members were undertaken and findings published as Best Practice Guidelines: Engaging with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities in Times of Disaster.

# RECRUITMENT OF MIGRANTS AS STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

## HOST STATES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Migrants can be hired as employees or retained as volunteers in relevant structures to foster direct engagement of migrant communities in prevention, preparedness, and emergency response management and planning. For example, state authorities and other actors can carry out recruitment campaigns targeting major or underrepresented migrant groups, engage migrant community leaders in the recruitment mechanism, and engage recruitment and employment agencies in identifying migrants with skills and capacities relevant to emergency response activities. Ensuring a non-threatening environment for learning and highlighting potential benefits of becoming employees or volunteers, such as skill development, employability, increased networking as well as better protection in the context of crises, may attract more migrants to such opportunities.

### [Migrant volunteers in the Federal Agency for Technical Relief, Germany](#)

The Federal Agency for Technical Relief (Bundesanstalt Technisches Hilfswerk, or THW) is a key actor in Germany's civil protection system, mandated to assist people in emergencies. In December 2015 THW embarked on a project to include migrants as volunteers at local THW branches. The initiative is aimed at improving their integration into German civil society by expanding their knowledge of emergency management, strengthening their social and technical skills, and encouraging them to commit to their host society. Their presence and engagement are also expected to strengthen civil protection in Germany and abroad: with their language skills and cultural competence, volunteers with a migrant background can contribute to enhancing the capacity of THW, including for its international missions.

### [Disaster Volunteer Interpreter Program, Japan](#)

In the event of a disaster, such as an earthquake, communication difficulties can be life-threatening. The Miyagi Prefecture in Japan established the Disaster Volunteer Interpreter program that allows for regions hit by a disaster to request the services of a volunteer interpreter to assist foreign residents who are not proficient in Japanese. Disaster Volunteer Interpreters are vital lifelines, facilitating communication in times of need, including on the scale of a disaster and where migrants can access assistance. Sent to refuge centers and other facilities in a disaster area, volunteer interpreters translate/ interpret notices and announcements, as well as provide support for foreign nationals in Miyagi. Volunteers can be of any nationality and conversationally proficient in Japanese and in another language.

# IOM TRAINING COURSE: INTEGRATING MIGRANTS IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY IN THEIR HOST COUNTRIES

This training course targets the personnel of emergency management institutions and aims to improve the integration of migrants in emergency preparedness, response and recovery. The course covers elements such as understanding the characteristics of migrant groups in their host country, communicating with migrants, planning for migrants' evacuation, and assisting migrants before and after emergencies. IOM organizes national and regional trainings and training of trainers globally.

## The training course at a glance:

Introduction: Scope and aim of the training
Module 1: Setting the scene
Module 2: Migrants' vulnerability and resilience in crisis situations
Module 3: Relevant frameworks, actors and institutions
Module 4: Profiling, quantifying and localizing migrants
Module 5: Involving migrants in preparedness, response and recovery efforts
Module 6: Communicating with migrants before, during and after emergencies
Module 7: Planning for and supporting migrant-inclusive evacuations
Module 8: Delivering appropriate relief and recovery assistance



## Learning Objectives

- Raising the awareness of emergency management personnel about migrants' specific characteristics, needs and capacities in the face of different kinds of crises;
- Providing concrete information and practical guidance to reduce migrants' vulnerability in crises through a variety of measures, including the delivery of appropriate information and services, improved engagement and involvement of migrants, and evaluation of response efforts.



## Target audience

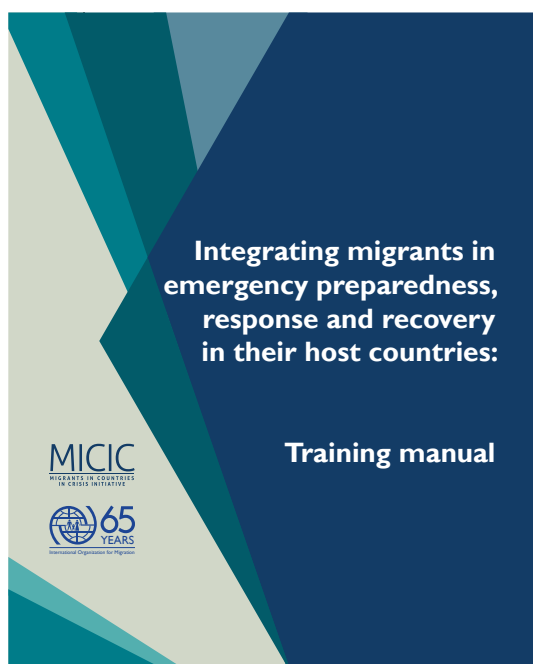
This training course explicitly targets the work of State and non-State actors dealing directly with emergency management in migrants' host countries. The main target of the course is the technical staff of emergency and disaster risk management and civil protection institutions who work at the national and subnational or regional levels.



## Duration

The course can be organized as a 2 or 3-day training, or as a 5-day Training of Trainers.

The course' Reference Handbook is available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.



The Guidelines in Action present implementation examples and tools to support the operationalization of the MICIC Initiative Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster. Practices and tools may be relevant for one or more stakeholders. Find more examples of practices in the MICIC Guidelines and in the online Repository of Practices on our website.

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