



FEMA

May 8, 2017

Dear Preparedness Partner:

Research suggests that the level of an individual's preparedness is directly linked to their ability to recover after a disaster. In addition, survey data tells us that historically underserved communities have not fared well following disasters when compared to other groups. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducted a pilot study in 2016 to better understand this disparity in levels of preparedness between certain communities. Specifically, the Individual and Community Preparedness Division (ICPD) at FEMA examined how historically underserved communities receive preparedness messages, and whether or not those messages are effective in encouraging preparedness actions among populations disproportionately affected by disasters.

In 2017, ICPD plans to collaborate with partners across the country to collect additional information about preparedness messages and their efficacy. By way of this letter, I invite you to help us expand the breadth of this study by hosting a community-based discussion on the topic of preparedness messages. These discussions will allow community members to share their thoughts and opinions about disasters, ways to prepare, as well as barriers and motivations to getting prepared.

These discussions will also start what we at ICPD hopes is a long term partnership between your local group and local Emergency Management officials, to provide better ways to take actions to prepare, along with sharing with your group local preparedness training and education opportunities. Upon completion of the project, ICPD plans to apply the findings to its own preparedness programming, as well as make findings available to the national emergency management community. Your participation is key in helping FEMA meet this goal.

Attached to this email you will find a guide for community leaders and worksheets for participants of these discussions. The discussion leader guide contains instructions on how to plan a meeting, invite community members, as well as facilitation techniques and instructions on returning the results to FEMA. We ask that partners hold a community meeting and submit the subsequent results to ICPD by Tuesday, July 25, 2017.

If you or your networks would like to host a meeting, or have questions about this research and its purpose, please contact Marvin SaintPreux at ICPD ([marvin.saintpreux@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:marvin.saintpreux@fema.dhs.gov)).

Thank you for your continued collaboration as we work to prepare all Americans for the emergencies and hazards they face. We hope you will consider partnering with us on this very important effort.

Sincerely,

  
Charlotte Hyams Porter

Acting Director  
Individual and Community Preparedness Division  
Federal Emergency Management Agency