



CERT Guide to Community Preparedness

Course Workbook

August 2021



FEMA



Contents

Workbook Purpose	3
Note for In-Person Lessons	4
Lesson 1: Building on the Basics	5
Lesson Summary	5
Discussion Questions.....	6
Potential CERT Activities	8
Lesson 2: Thinking More Deeply About Community	9
Lesson Summary	9
Discussion Questions.....	10
Improve Community Relationships	11
Lesson 3: Community Impact Analysis	12
Lesson Summary	12
Discussion Questions.....	13
Community Risk Assessment Table	14
Lesson 4: Action Planning	15
Lesson Summary	15
How to Build Community Relationships	16
Discussion Questions.....	17
Community Members and Topics for Events	18
Resources	19
Continuing Education.....	19

WORKBOOK PURPOSE

This workbook is a companion document to the CERT Guide to Community Preparedness course. It includes additional discussion questions, activities, templates, and information that was not included in the course. This can be used as part of a group or individual activity.

NOTE FOR IN-PERSON LESSONS

Include a list of materials for the activities. This includes:

- Easel pad and easel or whiteboard
- Markers
- Printed versions of the worksheets

For each discussion question, allow the group to have a conversation justifying their answer.

Complete worksheets during a group brainstorming session with the group presenting its answers or as a timed individual session.

LESSON 1: BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Lesson Summary

- Defined what a community is, what creates a community, and the various entities that make up a community.
 - For the purpose of this course, a community is a group of people that is close geographically because CERTs are usually organized by location.
 - Entities that make up a community include: Non-governmental organizations, Territorial entities, Faith-based organizations, K-12 schools and institutions of higher education, Government, Tribal Councils, hospital/healthcare, non-profit groups, disability organizations, private sector, individuals, families, neighborhoods, and social clubs.
- Provided a brief refresher of the CERT Basic Training Course to show individual preparedness and scale-up to the community level.
 - The CERT Basic Training Course states, “Community preparedness is a key priority in lessening the impact of disasters. It is critical that all community members take steps to prepare prior to an event.”
 - The CERT Basic Training Course also talked about the specific attributes of the community: the threat and hazards profile and vulnerabilities of the area; the existing infrastructure, resources, and skills within the community; and the population composition of the community.
 - The CERT Basic Training Course also included examples of whom to engage with in the community: government leaders and the public sector, community leaders from the private and non-profit sectors, and the public.
- Highlighted the role of CERTs in building community preparedness and how CERTs fit into FEMA community lifelines.
 - CERT community preparedness activities include identifying and aiding neighbors and coworkers who might need assistance during an emergency or disaster, distributing preparedness materials, and doing preparedness demonstrations.
 - Many of the response activities CERTs perform align to specific lifelines. These lifelines include Safety and Security; Health and Medical; Food, Water, and Shelter; and Communications.



Discussion Questions

1. Think about your community. Based on this lesson, list all of the community entities in your community. Be as specific as possible.



2. Think about your past CERT experiences. How many of them have been focused on preparedness?

- Choose one of the preparedness activities and think about how it could be expanded to include key community entities.

3. Have you ever done any preparedness planning for your family or place of business?

- If so, pick one and list how it could be expanded to general planning for your community. What else would you include? What would remain the same?

- If not, think about the types of steps you would take to prepare yourself and those closest to you. Now think about how to expand that to include your surrounding community.

4. Pick three CERT activities you've done over the past five years. List the activities and which community lifeline they would support.

Activity	FEMA Community Lifelines

Potential CERT Activities

Fill out the following table identifying potential activities you can present to your sponsoring organization based on what you've learned in this course. Include potential community organization(s) to coordinate with, target audience, and benefit(s) to the community.

Activity/Topic	Community Entity(ies) to Coordinate	Target Audience	Community Benefits

LESSON 2: THINKING MORE DEEPLY ABOUT COMMUNITY

Lesson Summary

- Understand the concept and application of FEMA's whole community approach to preparedness, response, and recovery.
 - “A means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interests.” – A Whole Community Approach to Emergency Management: Principles, Themes, and Pathways for Action, December 2011
 - Principle 1: Understand and meet the actual needs of the whole community
 - Principle 2: Engage and empower all parts of the community
 - Principle 3: Strengthen what works well in communities on a daily basis
- Components of a community:
 - Government: Includes any entity that governs and/or the public sector. The government has the responsibility to develop, test, and refine emergency operations plans; ensure emergency responders have adequate skills and resources; and provide services to protect and assist its citizens.
 - Private Sector: Comprised of entities that are not part of the government. Preparedness activities include participating on the local collaborative planning council to provide insights and perspectives reflecting their industry or the constituency they serve.
 - General Public: The general public is the majority of a given community. This includes private citizens, subsets of communities (such as communities of faith and underserved communities), and smaller organizations.
 - There are many community entities that do not entirely fit in the groups mentioned earlier in this lesson. They include faith-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups for underserved communities, and non-profit organizations. They all have roles that align with two or more of the groups mentioned and should be considered when identifying community engagement partners.



Discussion Questions

1. Based on your previous CERT activities and what you've learned in this course, were there any community members you didn't think to include? If so, how can you include them in the future?



2. Are there any community organizations or programs that you know work well in your community that you'd like to start working with? If so, identify three ways you can work with them in the future.

Improve Community Relationships

Using the community organization and target audience information from the Lesson 1 worksheet, list how working with a specific community entity would improve community relationships using the three whole community principles.

Community Entity	Principle 1: Understand and Meet the Actual Needs of the Whole Community	Principle 2: Engage and Empower All Parts of the Community	Principle 3: Strengthen What Works Well in Communities on a Daily Basis

LESSON 3: COMMUNITY IMPACT ANALYSIS

Lesson Summary

- How to identify the unique hazards and vulnerabilities faced by your community
 - To assess your community's vulnerability to hazards, it is useful to:
 - Identify the most common disasters that occur;
 - Identify possible hazards with most severe impact;
 - Consider recent and/or historical impacts;
 - Identify potential locations in the community for specific hazards — people, buildings, and infrastructure; and
 - Consider what to expect for disruption of service and length of restoration.
 - Coordinate with:
 - Your local/county emergency manager;
 - Your sponsoring organization;
 - First responders;
 - Local schools and the local school district;
 - Utility company personnel; and
 - Local business and industry personnel.
- How to conduct a risk assessment
 - Numerical value to probability and impact



Discussion Questions

1. Based on your previous experience, how have you collected information on your community hazards and potential impact? Have they been accurate? Are there alternate ways to collect this information?



2. With approval of your sponsoring organization, you are given an opportunity to work with a community center to help them determine their hazards and impact. What steps are you taking/ activities are you doing before your first meeting with this community center?

Community Risk Assessment Table

Pick one hazard that affects your community and list all the assets (places, people, equipment, etc.) that are at risk. Rate the probability and impact on a 1–5 scale (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), then score the overall hazard rating by multiplying the probability and impact ratings.

Asset at Risk	Hazard	Probability (1–5)	Impact (1–5)	Overall Hazard Rating

LESSON 4: ACTION PLANNING

Lesson Summary

- How to build relationships with individuals and organizations in a community, and how to use those relationships to create a resilient community.
 - Building relationships
 - Meet people where they are
 - Build trust through participation
 - Leverage relationships to create a resilient community
 - Close capability and resource gaps
 - Coordinate actions and activities
 - Supplement rather than compete
 - Increase information sharing
 - Improve communications
- How to organize a CERT preparedness activity to enhance the response and/or recovery in your community.
 - Logistics
 - Identify type of activity, topic, stakeholders, and target audience
 - Reserve a meeting space for the date and time
 - Communication and event planning
 - Promote
 - Plan the activity
 - Event and post
 - Hold the activity
 - Collect feedback
 - Begin planning the next one
- Other FEMA preparedness tools and online courses for use in your community.
 - See Resources page



How to Build Community Relationships

1. Be clear about the purposes or goals of the engagement effort and the populations and/or communities you want to engage.
2. Become knowledgeable about the community's culture, economic conditions, social networks, political and power structures, norms and values, demographic trends, history, and experience with efforts by outside groups to engage it in various programs. Learn about the community's perceptions of those initiating the engagement activities.
3. Go to the community, establish relationships, build trust, work with the formal and informal leadership, and seek commitment from community organizations and leaders to create processes for mobilizing the community.



Discussion Questions

1. Your sponsoring organization has asked you to meet with a community organization that is new to preparedness. What information are you bringing to this first meeting?



- What activities/background information are you doing before this meeting?

2. Pick a community entity you have worked with in the past. Based on what you've learned in this section, list 3 steps you would consider taking to improve your relationship.

Community Members and Topics for Events

Fill out the following table identifying your community entities, contact information for each, and which topics presented in this course could be useful to share with them.

Community Entity	Contact Information	Topic(s)

RESOURCES

CERT: <https://community.fema.gov/PreparednessCommunity/s/welcome-to-cert>

FEMA National Planning Frameworks: www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/frameworks

FEMA Protective Actions Research: <https://community.fema.gov/ProtectiveActions/s/>

CERT Hazard Annex: ready.gov/CERT

Ready Business: ready.gov/Business

Ready Kids: ready.gov/Kids

Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK): ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/ready_emergency-financial-first-aid-toolkit.pdf

Youth Preparedness Council (YPC): ready.gov/kids/youth-preparedness-council

Ready.gov Risk Assessment: ready.gov/risk-assessment

Continuing Education

CERT Basic Training Course: ready.gov/CERT

E-426: Building a Roadmap to Resilience: A Whole Community Training

CBO Open Training: <https://community.fema.gov/opentraining>

You Are Help Until Help Arrives: ready.gov/untillhelparrives

FEMA Emergency Management Institute (EMI) Independent Study Program:

- IS-20.21: Diversity Awareness Course 2021:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-20.21>
- IS-315.A: CERT and the Incident Command System (ICS):
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-315.a>
- IS-317.A: Introduction to Community Emergency Response Team (CERTs):
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-317.a>
- IS-505: Religious and Cultural Literacy and Competency in Disaster:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-505>



FEMA