

UUA-UUSC GULF COAST RELIEF
RESULTS & ASSESSMENT REPORT

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- **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Nearly all facets of Unitarian Universalist institutional response to Hurricane Katrina were limited by lack of plans and preparation.

- ☆ *At the very least the central recommendation coming from this assessment is the need for the UUA to identify its purpose and resources around disaster response and to develop and implement plans accordingly. Dedicated leadership and an organizational home for disaster preparation and response would most effectively facilitate development and implementation of any such plans.*
- ☆ *With its recent history of responding strategically and programmatically to major disasters worldwide, the UUSC is at a more effective state of readiness than the UUA with respect to alignment of its mission and organizational capabilities for disaster response. UUSC has both a program unit with personnel and a programmatic framework for disasters. The enormity of the Katrina disaster certainly strained the organizational resources of the UUSC. To refine its approach toward and readiness for domestic disasters, the UUSC could further examine organizational stress points and new opportunities for its mission revealed through the Gulf Coast relief effort.*
- ☆ *Both the UUA and UUSC should look toward developing flexible and scalable organizational structures and processes for domestic disaster response. Targeted use of skilled temporary contract personnel would be one important element of such an approach.*
- ☆ *Both UUA and UUSC could look toward more effective leveraging of resources for disaster response by further development of their partnership and through strategic partnerships with appropriate other faith-based and/or human rights/community service organizations.*

Learnings from this assessment suggest a staged approach to moving toward effective institutional disaster response for the future. **It is recommended that the UUA form a cross-organizational study team to undertake learning, research, reflection and early planning stages, and that the work of such a study team transition to a more permanent organizational entity to complete the planning and to carry out and coordinate the building and preparation of organizational infrastructure and systems. The core of the team should be hired or seconded for its duration. Specific experience in organizational disaster preparedness and response, particularly with religious denominations, should be sought for this study team.**

2.0 BACKGROUND

On Monday, August 29, 2005 Hurricane Katrina struck coastal Louisiana and Mississippi as a strong Category 4 storm with sustained winds of nearly 145 mph and coastal storm surge of up to 28 feet (Katrina: What Happened When. <http://www.factcheck.org/article348.html>). As the immense scale and scope of the tragedy unfolded, UUA President, Rev. William Sinkford issued a special appeal with the announcement of a joint UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund (the “Fund”) to “go toward local relief efforts and to UU congregations so that their ministries in their communities can be restored.” By mid-September the Fund had surpassed one million dollars. By December 2005 donations exceeded \$2.8 million and with a \$500,000 matching grant from the Shelter Rock Foundation, the Fund surpassed \$3.4 million. Donations continued to come in throughout 2006 such that by the end of the year the Fund had surpassed \$3.6 million in total contributions.

Within two weeks of Katrina’s landfall the UUA and UUSC administrations established the Gulf Coast Relief Panel (the “Panel”) to assess needs and distribute the Fund according to its purpose. The Panel included UUA and UUSC staff leadership, UUA Southwest and Mid-South district leadership, and congregational and ministerial leadership from the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge and the minister serving UU churches in Ellisville and Jackson, Mississippi. The Panel’s work continues with anticipated final granting of the balance of the Fund by June 2007.

The 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes revealed clearly the important role of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in disaster response. Especially in contrast to widely documented failings of local, state and national government response, FBOs were recognized as frontline providers of immediate relief and among the most resilient organized source of longer-term recovery assistance. Hundreds of religious organizations and individual churches have responded to helping rebuild New Orleans and the Gulf Coast (see NPR story upon the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5732202>) The federal agency the Corporation for National and Community Service estimated in September, 2006 that more than 575,000 Americans had provided volunteer response to Hurricane Katrina (The Power of Help and Hope After Katrina By the Numbers: Volunteers in the Gulf, http://www.nationalservice.org/pdf/katrina_volunteers_respond.pdf) Appendix H lists just a few resources on response of faith-based organizations to disaster.

From almost any perspective (the size of the Gulf Coast Relief Fund, the joint effort by the UUA and UUSC, the deployment of organizational resources) Katrina spawned an unprecedented UU institutional response to a domestic disaster. With no preexisting plan for such response, nearly every step taken was newly devised to meet immediate and near-term perceived needs. One year after Katrina, the UUA-UUSC administrations commissioned this assessment of the work of the Fund to identify learnings that could guide future disaster response.

This report summarizes the observations and recommendations of the assessment. It should be viewed as an assemblage of learnings from rather than an evaluation of the UUA-UUSC response to the Gulf Coast disaster. No preexisting plans or expectations existed to provide a baseline for a formal evaluation. Nevertheless, there is much that the UUA and UUSC can learn from this experience.

2.1 Format of this Report

This report is organized to serve four purposes:

1. To report on the accomplishment of the work of the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund.
2. To provide a platform for future institutional disaster planning and preparedness through a learning assessment of the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast relief effort.
3. To distill, from the results and learning assessment of UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast relief effort, the author's recommendations on ways to move forward toward appropriate and effective institutional disaster response.
4. To provide an archive of important documents assembled or created in the process of conducting this assessment (the "Appendices"). The organization of these source materials can allow others to access and interpret lessons from the experience of the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast response as they deal with future disaster preparedness efforts.

2.2 About the Author

Joe Sullivan, was contracted in May 2006 by the UUA to serve as part-time project manager for the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund. Sullivan serves as President of the Southwest District of the UUA, and since November 2005 served as that District's representative on the Gulf Coast Relief Panel. He is a charter member of the Henry David Thoreau UU Congregation of Fort Bend County, Texas (suburban Houston). His professional background includes 23 years in the oil and gas exploration business as a project manager, business development manager and exploration geologist.

3.0 RESULTS OF GULF COAST RELIEF FUND

3.1 Overview: Fund Purpose, Fund Panel, and Process

Within two days of Hurricane Katrina's landfall, UUA President, Rev. William Sinkford and UUSC President, Charlie Clements established the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund. In letters of September 1 and 3, 2005 Sinkford fervently urged Unitarian Universalists to contribute to the Fund *"for local relief efforts and UU congregations so that their ministries in their communities can be restored."*

The Fund became the organizational vehicle for official institutional response to the Katrina disaster. Shortly after creation of the Fund, the decision was made by the UUA and UUSC presidents to distribute 2/3 of the Fund to the most marginalized and needy communities (the "Community" funds) and 1/3 to the recovery of affected UU Gulf Coast congregations and their ministries (the "Congregational" funds). By September 6, 2005 the initial Gulf Coast Relief Panel (the "Panel") was formed for the purpose of assessing needs and recommending distribution of the Fund according to its purpose. On this initial call the Panel further articulated the purpose of the Fund to "both address the needs of the most marginalized people as they rebuild their lives and livelihoods, and to support UU congregations and their ministries at this critical juncture." The Panel's formal charge was drafted by January, 2006 and is attached as Appendix G.ii. The seven-person Panel has reported to the UUA and UUSC Administrations through UUA Executive Vice President, Kay Montgomery and UUSC Deputy Director, Mark McPeak.

Members of the Panel included:

- Rev. Meg Riley (Panel Chair): UUA Director of Advocacy and Witness
- Eunice Benton: District Executive of the Mid-South District of the UUA
- Rev. Steve Crump: Sr. Minister, Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA
- Rebecca Cureau, Ph.D.: New Orleans native and member of the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA
- Atema Eclai, UUSC Director of Programs (through October, 2005)
- Anne Odin-Heller: Interim District Executive of Southwest District of the UUA (through October, 2005)
- Rev. Jacqueline Luck: Minister, UU Church of Jackson, MS and Our Home UU Church of Ellisville, MS
- Joe Sullivan: President, Southwest District of the UUA (beginning November, 2005)
- Martha Thompson: UUSC Program Manager for Rights in Humanitarian Crisis (beginning December, 2005)

In November, 05 Joe Sullivan replaced Anne Heller on the Panel and in December Martha Thompson replaced Atema Eclai. From mid-December, 05 to March, 06 administrative support was provided to the Panel in the person of Erik Kesting, UUA Young Adult & Campus ministry assistant and ministry student at Harvard Divinity School. Since March, 06 Megan Joiner, ministry student at Union Theological Seminary in NYC, has provided administrative support to the Panel.

The Panel first met by teleconference on September 6 and 13, 2005 then in person with local UU congregational leaders on September 19-21 in Baton Rouge. Since November, 05, the Panel has met bi-weekly by teleconference and in person in New Orleans in December, 06. Kay Montgomery has formally authorized Fund payments upon receipt of approved proposals from the Panel. Appendix A provides a summary timeline of key events for the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund.

Four working groups/advisory boards have supported the charge of the Panel either through evaluation and recommendation of specific grant proposals in accord with the purpose of the Fund (Community Funds and New Orleans Strategic Planning groups), through specific recovery planning and support for UU congregations (New Orleans and Mississippi strategic planning groups), or through coordination support of the volunteer program (Volunteer Program Advisory Group). The working groups/advisory boards include:

- **Community Funds Working Group (“CFWG”)** – *Formed by mid-October, 2005 for the purpose of evaluating potential community partner organizations and developing and recommending grant proposals for the “Community” side of the Fund. Members of the Community Funds Working Group have included:*
Hillary Goodridge (Working Group Chair): Director of the UU Funding Panel
Pat Callair: Executive Director, The Leadership and Empowerment Institute
Rev. Steve Crump: Sr. Minister, Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA
Atema Eclai: UUSC Director of Programs
Nsombe Lambright, Executive Director of ACLU Mississippi
Rev. Jacqueline Luck, Minister of UU Church of Jackson, MS and Our Home UU Church of Ellisville, MS
Kimberly Richards, People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, New Orleans, LA
Martha Thompson, UUSC Program Manager, Rights in Humanitarian Crises

- **New Orleans Strategic Planning for Unitarian Universalism Working Group (“NOSPG”)** – *Formed as a result of motion by the UUA Board of Trustees. At its October, 05 meeting the Board approved the following motion: “The UUA board of Trustees is committed to the creation of a healthy Unitarian Universalist congregational presence in a rebuilt New Orleans. The Board requests that the Administration ensure that there is a strategic plan, developed in partnership with the Southwestern Conference and other appropriate parties, toward that end.” Kay Montgomery appointed Rev. Burton Carley, Trustee from the Southwest District, as Chair of the NOSPG under the charge described in Appendix G.iii. Members of the NOSPG have included leadership of the three New Orleans-area UU congregations and representatives from the UUA administration, the Southwest District and the Panel. Members included:*
Rev. Burton Carley (Working Group Chair): UUA Board Trustee, Southwest District and Sr. Minister of First Unitarian Church of Memphis, TN
Jyaphia Christos-Rodgers, First UU Church of New Orleans, LA
Wayne Clark, Ph.D.: UUA Director of Congregational Fundraising Services
Rebecca Cureau, Ph.D.: Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, (Panel’s representative)
Mary An Godshall: Community Church UU, New Orleans, LA

Dick Harris: North Shore UU, Lacombe, LA
Marilyn Malone: North Shore UU, Lacombe, LA
Rev. Marta Valentin: Minister, First UU New Orleans, LA
Rev. Jim VanderWeele: Minister, Community Church UU, New Orleans, LA
Mark Westergard: Past President, Southwest District of the UUA

- **Mississippi Strategic Planning for Unitarian Universalism Working Group (“MSPG”)** – *Formed by February, 06 under the guidance and leadership of Mid-South District Executive, Eunice Benton, to provide support and connection for leaders of the four small Mississippi UU congregations affected by Katrina. (MSPG met less formally than the NOSPG) Members of the MSPG have included:*
Eunice Benton (Convener): Mid-South District Executive
Robin Clark & Pat Cruise: Our Home UU Church, Ellisville, MS
Melinda Harthcock & Mike Kayes: Gulf Coast UU Fellowship, Gulfport, MS
Cindy Brown & Gwen Dennis: Hattiesburg UU Fellowship, Hattiesburg, MS
Margaret Drake, Trina Cameron & Tom Head: UU Church of Jackson, MS
Luanne Buchanan & Gail Stratton: UU Congregation of Oxford, MS
Hank Jaeckel & Gwen Wages: UU Fellowship of Tupelo, MS

- **Volunteer Program Advisory Group (“VPAG”)** – *Formed July-August, 06 as the UU volunteer program was adding staff in Mississippi and New Orleans. The VPAG charge was to:*
 - *provide advice, guidance and support to Volunteer Program staff;*
 - *assist Program staff in establishing Program budget and submitting it for grant funding;*
 - *assist Program staff in setting safety and liability standards and rules for the Program;*
 - *establish anti-racism/anti-oppression component for Program;*
 - *provide for regular reflection and feedback loop following each volunteer "event";*
 - *ensure clear mechanisms for communication among key parties of interest (Gulf Coast Relief Panel, New Orleans and Mississippi strategic working groups, Community Funds group, Hurricane Relief and Social Justice Project of UCBR, and partner organizations that the volunteer program is serving);*
 - *ensure that program experiences and results are appropriately and effectively communicated to the wider UU community.**VPAG members have included:*
Joe Sullivan (Chair): Project Manager, UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund
Rev. Marilee Baccich: Program Manager, Hurricane Relief & Social Justice Project of the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA (HRSJP)
Jyaphia Christos-Rodgers: First UU Church, New Orleans, LA
Chéré Coen: Volunteer Coordinator, HRSJP
Diana Dorroh: Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, HRSJP Steering Team
Martha Thompson: UUSC Program Manager, Rights in Humanitarian Crises
Jinnie Trabulsi: Mississippi Volunteer Coordinator
Elizabeth Trotter: Community Church UU, New Orleans, LA

3.2 Congregational Funds Results

During September and October, 05, the Panel approved early discretionary grants to the three New Orleans-area UU congregations and to the Mid-South District for the benefit of its affected Mississippi congregations. Additionally, the three New Orleans congregations were granted funds to cover six months of minister compensation. Following the devastating late September, 05 strike of Hurricane Rita the Panel also approved a discretionary grant and three months of minister support to the Beaumont, Texas UU congregation. The NOSPG and MSPG were in place by mid-December, 05 and February, 06 respectively, and remaining grants to provide relief and recovery to Gulf Coast congregations were made through recommendations of these two working groups. Subsequent grants extended minister and staff support for the New Orleans-area congregations through October, 07. Summary Congregational funding commitments as of January, 07 by general category are:

- **Congregational Discretionary Grants:** \$125,000
- **Early Direct Ministerial Support:** \$40,000
- **Salaries of Ministers and other Staff Through October 2007:** \$597,928
- **Facility Rentals:** \$53,146
- **Building Repairs:** \$223,118

(Additional financial support from partner congregations has not been investigated)

A complete list of Congregational Funds grants is shown in Appendix B.i.

3.3 Community Funds Results

The Community Funds Working Group employed the UUSC's strategic/programmatic approach to assessing needs and evaluating potential community partner organizations. The CFWG outlined four strategic objectives from the Fund's general purpose to provide relief and recovery to the most marginalized and needy communities affected by Katrina. The four objectives and total grant commitments as of January, 07 were:

- **Working for People's Return and Participation in an Equitable Reconstruction with a Focus on Leadership of Color**
15 organizations: \$701,639
- **Practical Assistance for Rebuilding/Repairing Housing in Low Income Communities**
3 organizations: \$176,450
- **Advocacy and Policy Work Around the Right to Return, Right to Retain Land and Fair Housing Access**

13 organizations: \$753,338+

- **Worker’s Rights and Access to Fair and Safe Employment**
4 organizations: \$339,620+
- **Other: UU Volunteer Program & UUSC JustWorks Camps**
\$166,133

(+ indicates that some grants fall into more than one category)

Appendix B.ii provides a complete list of Community Funds grants and grantees, and Appendix G.vi includes reports on Community Funds strategic objectives, approved grant applications and certain grantee/partner organization reports.

3.4 Volunteer Program Results

Like many citizens and faith communities, Unitarian Universalists from all over the country responded immediately to come to the Gulf Coast. Right away the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge (UCBR) became the center of phone and email offers of volunteers, supplies, and money for hurricane relief. The challenges that UCBR and its Baton Rouge community rose to in the early days to months after Katrina cannot be overstated. The city was overrun with evacuees and relief workers. Many church members opened their homes to evacuees for weeks and months, while serving as relief volunteers throughout Baton Rouge. Within two days UCBR was holding meetings of its Disaster Response Task Force and formed a Steering Committee to manage its relief efforts. (for a complete reports of the relief work of UCBR and its Hurricane Relief and Social Justice Project see Appendix G.vi.)

Although housing and coordination of UU volunteers were not explicitly part of the Fund purpose or charge of the Panel, this work soon became a significant part of UCBR’s relief efforts. By October, 05 UCBR had organized its Weekend Warriors, a group of volunteers who led monthly expeditions to New Orleans to gut and repair the UU churches and homes of their members and others. In November, 05 UCBR submitted the first grant approved through the Community Funds Working Group of the Panel for a program director and volunteer coordinator for their Hurricane Relief & Social Justice Project (HRSJP). Staff was hired and in place by mid-February, 06 and the project began systematically coordinating groups of Unitarian Universalists volunteers to assist with congregational and community recovery in greater New Orleans. During April-June, 06 volunteers renovated parts of the second floor of First UU Church of New Orleans for use as a volunteer center. Beginning August 1, 2006 a Mississippi volunteer coordinator was hired on a one-year grant and two successive part-time volunteer coordinators were hired in New Orleans to assist the Baton Rouge-based staff with on-the-ground coordination of the program. With the end of the HRSJP grant in February, 07, the volunteer program will transition to a joint UUA/UUSC national program staffed by the UUSC. Community Funds will underwrite the initial transition and startup costs of the new program, but additional fundraising by the UUA/UUSC is anticipated for ongoing support of the volunteer program. Thus far all

grant funding for the volunteer program has come through the Community portion of the Fund. Summary volunteer program funding and volunteer statistics are:

- **Volunteer Coordination Staff at UCBR (Baton Rouge):** \$81,000
- **New Orleans & Mississippi Volunteer Coordinators:** \$67,908
- **UUSC JustWorks Camps:** \$11,000
- **First UU New Orleans Volunteer Center:** \$6,225
- **Volunteer Program Statistics (February 1, 2006 to February 28, 2007)*:**
 - Number of volunteer groups placed: 79
 - Number of inquiries responded to from congregations, schools & organizations: ~250
 - Number of volunteers placed: ~1,000
 - Total volunteer hours: > 31,000
 - UUSC Just Works camps: 6 (4 supported by the Fund)

*(*does not include many UU volunteers/volunteer groups who have come to the Gulf Coast without scheduling or coordination through UUA-UUSC sponsored programs in Baton Rouge-New Orleans and Mississippi)*

3.5 Fund Financial Summary

Donations came in quickly upon the initial call for relief funds on September 1, 2005. By mid-September, 05 – a little more than two weeks after Katrina’s landfall -- the Fund totaled over \$1 million. In early October, 05 the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock offered to match dollar for dollar every contribution to the Fund after October 2nd up to a total matching grant of \$500,000. With the Shelter Rock matching grant the Fund exceeded \$3 million by the end of October, 05. The Fund reached approximately \$3,347,000 by the end of 2005, and the Fund’s total cumulative contributions were approximately \$3,644,000 by January, 07 as donations continued to flow in during the most recent year. A June 30, 2006 Stewardship Report on the Fund (Appendix G.vii) indicated that as of that report 12,760 gifts, including contributions from 664 congregations and their members had been made to the Fund.

Fundraising was managed out of the UUA office of Stewardship & Development. All Fund accounting was managed by the UUA under the supervision of Executive VP, Kay Montgomery. The Fund was established with a declaration to donors that at least 95% of funds would go to relief and recovery work with less than 5% of funds used for UUA administrative costs. Programmatic expenditures were tracked by the Funds two primary target purposes: Congregational (1/3 of Fund less 5% admin costs) and Community (2/3 of Fund less 5% admin costs). General programmatic expenditures (e.g. project manager) were allocated 1/3 from Congregational funds and 2/3 from Community funds. The following table shows a current financial summary of the Fund. The Panel anticipates

making final disbursements of the Fund by June 1, 07. More details on Congregational and Community fund expenditures are provided in Appendix B.

UUA–UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund -- *Financial Summary*

Category	\$	As of Date
Income		
Total Income	3,643,960	3/26/07
Total for Administrative Costs calculation *	3,406,239	3/26/07
5% of Total for Admin Costs	170,312	3/26/07
<i>Total Distributable Funds</i>	<i>3,473,648</i>	<i>3/26/07</i>
Administrative Funds		
5% of Total for Administrative Costs	170,312	3/26/07
Administrative Costs working total	149,035	2/28/07
<i>Remaining Administrative Funds</i>	<i>21,277</i>	<i>2/28/07</i>
Congregational Funds		
1/3 of Total Distributable Funds	1,157,871	3/26/07
Total spent & committed	1,138,689	3/26/07
<i>Remaining Congregational Funds</i>	<i>19,182</i>	<i>3/26/07</i>
Community Funds		
2/3 of Total Distributable Funds	2,315,777	3/26/07
Total spent & committed	2,045,198	3/26/07
<i>Remaining Community Funds</i>	<i>270,579</i>	<i>3/26/07</i>

* \$237,721 of income has been excluded from administrative cost burden, because it had been donated to the Fund before the UUA announced that up to 5% of the Fund would be used to cover administrative costs.

4.0 LEARNING ASSESSMENT OF THE GULF COAST RELIEF EFFORT

4.1 Purposes

This learning assessment set out to serve three purposes:

1. Report on the UUA-UUSC accomplishment of the purpose of the Gulf Coast Relief Fund (the “charge” to the Panel)
2. Document what worked well & what we would do differently for appropriate & effective response to domestic disasters
3. Provide a platform for planning and preparedness for future disaster response

4.2 Assessment Process

A number of processes were employed to identify and gather useful observations and questions for the purposes of this assessment. These included:

- **Online Survey** – During the last quarter of 2006, 69 people involved in the UUA-UUSC response to the Gulf Coast disaster were invited to answer a questionnaire utilizing the online survey tool “Survey Monkey”. The questionnaire attempted to gather opinions and observations on the effectiveness of the UUA-UUSC institutional response to the disaster – primarily focused on the efforts connected with the Gulf Coast Relief Fund. Those surveyed were involved in the UUA-UUSC relief effort from a number of perspectives. The 39 respondents from among the 69 invited to respond represented the following entities in their involvement with the UUA-UUSC relief effort:

(Note: The total exceeds 39 because respondents are included in all groups that they represent)

Responded/Invited	Organizational Group
7 of 8	Gulf Coast Relief Panel
4 of 8	Community Funds Working Group
9 of 10	New Orleans Strategic Planning Working Group
5 of 12	Mississippi Strategic Planning Working Group
7 of 7	Volunteer Program Advisory Group
7 of 11	New Orleans Area Congregational Leaders
4 of 4	Baton Rouge Congregational Leaders
5 of 12	Mississippi Congregational Leaders
6 of 13	UUA Headquarters Staff
6 of 8	UUA District Staff & District Lay Leaders
2 of 5	UUA Board of Trustees
4 of 8	UUSC Staff
1 of 2	UUSC Board of Trustees

One of the 39 survey respondents augmented his replies with a telephone interview. The full survey results are provided as Appendix C.

- **Panel Debriefing/Assessment Meeting** – In December, 06 the Gulf Coast Relief Panel conducted a full-day debriefing/assessment meeting of their work in accomplishing their charge. Notes from this meeting are provided as Appendix D.
- **Interviews** – Telephone interviews were conducted with four members of the UUA Trauma Response Ministry and three ministers of partner churches for the New Orleans area congregations. These interviews added perspectives and observations from leaders who were involved in concerted UU relief/recovery efforts that were not formally associated with the work of the Fund or Panel. Notes from these interviews are provided as Appendix E.
- **Panel – Advisory/Working Group Meeting Reports** – Reports and minutes of meetings of the Gulf Coast Relief Panel and its advisory/working groups identified many of the challenges faced at various stages of the relief/recovery effort. These reports/minutes are assembled as Appendix G.iv and G.v.
- **Fact-Finding Trip** – Over three days late October, 06 the Panel’s Meg Riley, Martha Thompson and Joe Sullivan visited with leaders of five affected Gulf Coast UU congregations (Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, LA; Gulf Coast UU Fellowship of Gulfport, MS; Community Church UU New Orleans, LA; First UU Church of New Orleans, LA; North Shore UU of Lacombe, LA) and with leaders of six community partner organizations. The main objective was to gather local input about dimensions for a possible extension of volunteer program beyond the end of Gulf Coast Relief Fund support, which was projected to end in February, 07 for New Orleans and July, 07 for Mississippi.

4.3 Online Survey Summary

The online survey sought impressions about the effectiveness of the UUA and UUSC institutional response to the Gulf Coast disaster and about organizational and process measures that could improve effectiveness to domestic disaster response. Effectiveness rating questions addressed:

- Effectiveness of UUA and UUSC roles in the response;
- Effectiveness of the UUA-UUSC partnership;
- Effectiveness of the Panel and its working/advisory group in accomplishing the purpose of the Fund.

Appendix C.i charts the responses to the effectiveness rating questions. In summary responses expressed general satisfaction with the UUA-UUSC response. Many praises were qualified with: “*under the circumstances*” or “*given that we hadn’t done anything like this before*” or “*given that we had no plan.*” There appeared no concentration of dissatisfaction among the representatives of the various groups surveyed. More than half

of respondents provided no response to rating effectiveness of the Panel's working/advisory groups. Greatest satisfaction was expressed for the work of the Community Funds Working Group, while least satisfaction was expressed for the New Orleans & Mississippi Strategic Planning working groups and the Volunteer Program Advisory Group.

Appendix C.ii provides the complete responses to the survey's open-ended questions with only slight editing to help obscure the source of specific responses.

4.4 Summary of Learnings – observations and strategic/tactical questions

Learnings are summarized as observations and associated strategic or tactical questions by examining assessment feedback from two general lenses:

- Accomplishment of the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund purpose; and
- The organizational or institutional systems in disaster response

The linked observations and strategic/tactical questions could provide a useful platform for future disaster planning and preparedness.

4.4.1 Accomplishment of the UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund Purpose

The Gulf Coast Relief Panel was charged to distribute funds raised in the 2005 UUA-UUSC Gulf Coast Relief Fund appeal in a manner consistent with donor expectations as reflected in communications from UUA President, Rev. William Sinkford and UUSC President, Charlie Clements, which stated the Fund purpose as:

- Relief and recovery for UU congregations so that their ministries in their communities can be restored (approximately 1/3 of funds) and
- Relief and recovery of the most marginalized and most needy communities (approximately 2/3 of funds).

A. Relief & recovery for UU congregations so that their ministries can be restored

Observation A1. The Fund purpose of “restoring ministries” was vague, making expectations difficult to meet and manage.

- *What do congregations need most to restore their ministries post-disaster?*
- *What does ministry for congregations in disaster-impacted communities look like? Near term? Long term? Should the aim be to restore ministry or build it anew?*
- *How do congregational properties and buildings play into conceptions of congregation's ministry and its restoration in affected areas?*

Observation A2. The relief effort missed the mark by not recognizing and focusing on trauma/crises “companioning” needs (immediate and long term) of congregations and their ministers. (see also “Trauma/Crisis Response” category under the “Other Observations and Strategic/Tactical Questions” Section 4.4.2 and in Appendix F “Suggestions from Feedback by Category”)

- *How do we organize and staff adequate trauma/crisis “companioning” of congregations for extended periods of time?*
- *When and under what circumstances are disaster-impacted congregations prepared to do their own strategic recovery planning?*
- *How do we best re-establish congregational protocols and rosters after disaster?*
- *What does it mean for a district or the UUA to be in right-relationship with a congregation in trauma?*

Observation A3. Initial emergency discretionary funding and later funds for salaries, rent, and repair were effective at stabilizing congregations.

- *What are appropriate and effective processes to ascertain (map) funding needs of disaster-impacted congregations? Near term? Long term?*

Observation A4. Mississippi’s lay-led congregations, without material infrastructure, were less well served by the response than were the New Orleans-area congregations.

- *How do we adequately support small, more isolated, and/or lay-led congregations to restore their ministries in the wake of disaster?*

Observation A5. Seemed to leaders in the New Orleans-area congregations that the Strategic Planning Working Group (NOSGP) was imposed as the means to funds, which seemed to clash with congregational polity and affected bye-in; reflected in the commonly heard saying in New Orleans, “*Nothing about us, without us, is for us.*”

- *How should congregational polity affect disaster fund allocation and strategic recovery processes?*
- *When and under what circumstances are disaster-impacted congregations prepared to do their own strategic recovery planning?*
- *How does the Association’s and congregation’s roles change through the phases of strategic recovery planning? Who manages the process?*

Observation A6. Strategic planning processes brought affected Gulf Coast congregations together in joint effort like never before.

- *When multiple congregations in an area are affected by a disaster, when and how should relief & recovery work be focused collectively on clusters of congregations, and when individually?*

Observation A7. Partner churches provided important support but were not part of the coordinated UUA/UUSC response. Congregations want to actively respond to disasters that affect fellow UU congregations in meaningful ways in addition to financial donations. Partner church relationships were cultivated opportunistically rather than strategically and garnered significant maintenance effort by leaders of disaster-affected congregations.

- *How do we strategically integrate a partner church process into disaster response?*
- *What should be the “job description” for a partner church? For a “managing” partner church?*
- *How do we best cultivate and maintain partner relationships without burdening leaders of the disaster-affected congregations?*
- *How do we manage input of UU “expert opinions” and support congregations on their recovery process?*

Observation A8. Nearby, inboard “flagship” congregations (UC Baton Rouge in this case) can play a vital staging, coordination and leadership role in disaster response.

- *How do we identify, recruit and prepare flagship congregations for leadership roles in disaster response and integrate them into the structure and process of the larger institutional disaster response?*
- *What are appropriate and effective roles for such congregations in the response?*

B. Relief & Recovery of the most marginalized and needy communities

Observation B1. The “Community funds” work was widely seen as the most effective part of the UUA/UUSC Relief Fund response. It was effective at taking broad statement of fund purpose and articulating specific strategic/programmatic objectives, which guided the identification of partner organizations for funding.

- *How do we consistently link funding (grants) decisions to mission objectives in disaster response?*

Observation B2. Linking congregational and community objectives under a single UUA/UUSC response organization created “living our faith” context to the response, which brought UU volunteers into relationship with community partner organizations and opened up opportunities for linked anti-racism and advocacy work.

- *When and how can UU disaster response be enhanced by joining congregational and community support in a coordinated effort?*

Observations B3. Organization and staffing of the community funds work was closely linked to mission and needs. The Community Funds Working Group came out of

needs identified by the Panel rather than by Board decree, and worked well to provide contextual information for the community work. Focused staffing expertise in the person of Martha Thompson greatly facilitated the effectiveness of the community funds response. It was important having people on the ground “mapping” needs immediately after the disaster, which facilitated the ability to select grantees (partner organizations) strategically.

- *How do we distinguish the roles of funding (grant) decisions from directing relief/recovery work?*
- *How do we organize, staff and coordinate these functions?*

C. Volunteer Program -- significant funded effort not anticipated in the Fund purpose or Panel’s charge

Observation C1. The volunteer program came out of tremendous response of UUs to take action and the great needs in the Gulf Coast for help.

- *How do we determine that volunteer mobilization and coordination will be part of a particular disaster response?*
- *How do we match and manage needs of affected communities, congregations and individuals with offers of help?*

Observation C2. Early lack of organizational staff structure and infrastructure for volunteers was problematic. The Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge, which initiated the program, demonstrated the critical role an inboard flagship church can play in disaster response.

- *How do we best mobilize, deploy and support UU volunteers in disaster response consistent with the roles UUA/UUSC are serving in a given disaster response?*
- *How would we best describe and communicate what effective, appropriate responses are from UU individuals and congregational groups in disaster relief and recovery?*

Observation C3. Linking congregational and community objectives under a single UUA/UUSC response organization created “living our faith” context to the response, which brought UU volunteers into relationship with community partner organizations and opened up opportunities for linked anti-racism and advocacy work. (*same as Observation B2*)

- *How should volunteer programs be linked to larger community justice issues and to partner groups being supported in a UUA/UUSC disaster response?*
- *How would we best orient volunteers to cultural and social justice contexts of a disaster area?*

Observation C4. It is important to consider the impact of traumatized communities on volunteers and on the on-the-ground staff working with communities and volunteers in disaster areas. Staff and volunteers need appropriate pastoral support. (see also “Trauma/Crisis Response Ministry” category under “Other Observations and Strategic/Tactical Questions” Section 4.4.2 and in Appendix F “Suggestions from Feedback by Category”)

- *How would we best provide the trauma/pastoral support for on-the-ground staff that manage volunteer programs?*
- *How would we best prepare volunteers for entering a trauma/crisis environment and support them during and after their work in the disaster area?*

4.4.2 The Organizational or Institutional Systems in Disaster Response

Other observations and strategic/tactical questions are more generally related to the organizational systems of disaster response, and are presented here accordingly. The following quote from a response to the online assessment survey captures a sentiment widely expressed.

“I also think that it is possible that we could have carried a reasonably effective response that was not good because it was 'reactive' rather than 'on mission' for the two organizations. We of course want to know whether or not our response effectively alleviated suffering and responded to the denial of human rights in the aftermath of the disaster. I hope that we also determine whether or not the response made sense in terms of the competencies and the missions of the two organizations involved.”

The most commonly cited concerns and suggestions collected through the assessment fall into the following categories:

- **Mission** -- Linking institutional purpose to organizational capabilities & funding priorities
- **Plans** -- From mission to policies & protocols and organizational, communications, and coordination templates adjustable for type, location, severity or stage of disaster
- **Organizational Structure & Staffing** – From mission & plans to staffing needs, leadership and group roles, and standby volunteer/contractor workforce for various plan templates
- **Trauma/Crisis Response Ministry** -- Skilled and dedicated short & long term care & “companioning” of congregations, congregational leaders, and relief workers; a critical capability and organizational element

- **Coordination/Response Process** -- From mission & plans to details of inter- & intra-organizational relationships; decision protocols & authorities; communications strategies & coordination; volunteer coordination
- **Preparedness** -- From mission & plans to outside alliance-building and internal training, “evangelizing”, and rehearsing for disaster response

Mission -- *Linking institutional purpose to organizational capabilities (resources, strengths)*

Observations:

- UUA response was reactive; mission was not clearly invoked; process was created on the fly.
- UUA’s primary accountability should be to long-term survival and success of congregations: *“If we cannot take care of our own, who are we to take care of others?”*
- UUSC exhibited clear mission and capabilities in disaster relief work.
 - *How do we see disaster response as fundamental religious work?*
 - *How do the UUA & UUSC (separately & jointly) express and prioritize their purpose in the context of disaster relief & recovery needs?*
 - *What are the respective organizational capabilities to achieve their primary missions in disaster response?*
 - *Under what circumstances and for what specific purposes would UUA & UUSC coordinate a joint disaster response?*

Mission -- *Linking institutional purpose to funding priorities*

Observations:

- There was no prior policy or plan as to how funds would be directed.
- Clearly communicated guidelines are needed for how funds will be raised and allocated.
 - *Should fundraising and fund allocation be distinct according to purpose for disaster relief/recovery? (e.g. congregational vs. wider community purposes)*
 - *How specifically should donor intentions direct fund allocation purpose?*
 - *Under what circumstances should fund allocation purpose(s) be determined by institutional entities closer to the disaster (district, cluster, congregations) rather than by UUA? How would we customize the funding process for type and/or scope of disaster?*

Plans -- *From mission to policies & protocols and plan templates adjustable for type, location, severity or stage of disaster*

Observations:

- “...the UUA did not have a plan regarding what its role should be...”
- “no pre-disaster organizational plan by the UUA. We made it up as we went along.”

- *What are the elements of an effective national (UUA) disaster plan such that it reflects the Association's declared mission in disaster response?*
- *What policies & protocols are needed to initiate a disaster response 'call' and to determine whether it will be a joint UUA-UUSC effort? Should UUA-UUSC create joint disaster response plans?*

Observations:

- One size does not fit all. Different types of disasters and different locations present different challenges. Need general guidelines and local sensitivities.
- Rebuilding of communities and congregations is a long-term endeavor.
- The recovery/rebuilding process is dynamic. Needs and situations continuously change. There are many variables or layers to community and individual recovery from disaster.
- *How would we best incorporate variability of types, location and severity of disasters into a national plan, and adjust to different stages of a disaster response?*
- *How would we create plans that acknowledge the dynamic nature of disaster recovery?*
- *How would we incorporate the UUA's organizational 'concentric rings' (districts, clusters, congregations) into the plans? How do you accommodate congregational polity into a national response?*

Organizational Structure & Staffing – *From mission & plans to staffing and specifically leadership needs*

Observations:

- People with other full-time UUA jobs were engaged to lead the response.
- The effort was hindered by not having a designated UUA coordinator whose exclusive job it was to work on this.
- We needed a 'crisis response team' that was clearly UUA-based and authorized.
- *How would we translate our declared mission in disaster response to the right, sustainable organization and staffing?*
- *What does leadership look like for disaster response?*
- *Should there be dedicated UUA leadership for disaster response? If so, what role(s) and authority should be placed with such leadership?*
- *What are the roles of Board and Administration leadership in disaster response?*

Organizational Structure & Staffing – *From mission & plans to organizational group & layer roles, and standby volunteer/contractor workforce for various plan templates*

Observations:

- The roles in the disaster response for each UUA department/program were not designated.
- UUA lacked pre-assigned and trained response people in various functions. UUSC was functionally better staffed and organized for the disaster response.

- *What should be the roles of existing organizational departments as well as specific functional positions and layers (national, districts, clusters, congregations) in disaster response?*
- *What skills/specialties should we seek for a standby volunteer/contractor workforce?*
- *What resources are needed to recruit & train a standby volunteer/contractor corps?*
- *How would volunteer/contractor resources be organized and deployed?*

Trauma/Crisis Response -- *Skilled and dedicated short to long term care & “companioning” of congregations, congregational leaders, and relief workers; a critical capability and organizational element*

Observations:

- The relief effort missed the mark by not recognizing and focusing on trauma/crisis “companioning” needs (immediate and long term) of congregations and their ministers.
- Appeared to be an institutional lack of appreciation of how to minister to those in trauma, and a lack of understanding for the lifecycle of traumatic response
- “I think we have a lot to learn about accountability and ministering to ‘our own’ when they are the survivors.”

- *How do we see ourselves and our UU communities in terms of trauma/crisis needs? How do we institutionally see trauma/crisis ministry as part of our mission / our religious calling?*

Observations:

- UUTRM was not adequately staffed and lacked the infrastructure (admin support, finances, telecom equipment) for the extensive, long-term companioning needs of affected Gulf Coast congregations and their ministers.
- The UU Trauma Response Ministry team (UUTRM) is not clearly in the UUA organizational structure.
- The Panel and its working/advisory groups had some in operational mode in the midst of trauma. Districts needed crisis support, too.

- *What would effective trauma/crisis response look like?*
- *What would effective infrastructure for trauma response ministry look like?*
- *How should UUTRM be integrated organizationally for most effective disaster response?*
- *How do we address the potential in certain disasters that several or all levels (‘concentric rings’ -- congregations, clusters, districts, headquarters) of the organization will need trauma/crisis ministry?*

Observations:

- Leaders of disaster-impacted congregations at times felt overburdened by UUs wanting to help in ways that weren't appropriate or expecting the affected congregations to provide housing/hospitality.
- It is important to consider the impact of traumatized communities on volunteers and on the on-the-ground staff working with communities and volunteers in disaster areas. Staff and volunteers need appropriate pastoral support.
 - *How would we effectively recruit and prepare UU staff and volunteers (including partner churches) to provide relief and support in appropriate ways without burdening those living in the disaster?*
 - *How would we best provide the trauma/pastoral support for on-the-ground staff that manage volunteer programs?*
 - *How would we best prepare volunteers for entering a trauma/crisis environment and support them during and after their work in the disaster area?*

Coordination/Response Process -- *From mission & plans to details of inter- & intra-organizational relationships, decision protocols & authorities*

Observations:

- UUA departments/groups and districts were not effectively linked or coordinated in the response.
- The Panel was charged to distribute the Fund, but not to coordinate or administer response programs. The coordination piece was missing.
- A missing piece was a real presence on the ground; especially a coordinating center in the early months.
 - *How would we effectively tap into and coordinate needed expertise in UUA organizational groups for disaster response?*
 - *How would we best transcend established district boundaries and coordinate with congregational & cluster resources in disaster response?*
 - *What relationships, protocols, processes need to be established between UUA & UUSC for effective response coordination?*
 - *Who coordinates the actual relief/recovery work, particularly the work on-the-ground?*

Coordination/Response Process -- *From mission & plans to communications strategies, systems & coordination*

Observations:

- “The biggest imperative is a strategic approach to communications.”
- To those in crisis and to those responding on the ground, UUA leadership was communicating expectations in all statements or silences; in all actions and inactions. These messages were not coordinated under any strategy, which was problematic.
- Most UUA communications systems & resources (website, publications, listserves, GA, district assemblies) were utilized, but not strategically coordinated in the response.

- *How would we best fashion effective communications strategies and protocols for various types, levels and stages of disaster response?*
- *How would we best utilize and strategically coordinate communications systems and resources in disaster response?*
- *Who would be the leadership spokesperson(s) in disaster response?*

Preparedness -- *From mission & plans to outside alliance-building and internal training, “evangelizing”, and rehearsing for disaster response*

Observations:

- “As an institution, we were unprepared for this -- we had never done this before.”
 - UUA doesn’t need to reinvent the wheel. There are many faith-based organizations with long history of disaster response.
 - With the exception of UUA Trauma Response Ministry there is no appropriate or effective training for disaster responders.
 - No institutional program for rehearsal of disaster response plans.
 - No “disaster preparedness for congregations” program.
-
- *What does it mean to be prepared for disaster response?*
 - *Which faith-based organizations can we best learn from?*
 - *Which faith-based or human rights/needs organizations are suitable for an alliance in disaster response and under what circumstances?*
 - *What resources and time should be dedicated to training, program development and rehearsing response plans?*

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Nearly all facets of Unitarian Universalist institutional response to Hurricane Katrina were limited by lack of plans and preparation.

- ☆ *At the very least the central recommendation coming from this assessment is the need for the UUA to identify its purpose and resources around disaster response and to develop and implement plans accordingly. Dedicated leadership and an organizational home for disaster preparation and response would most effectively facilitate development and implementation of any such plans.*
- ☆ *With its recent history of responding strategically and programmatically to major disasters worldwide, the UUSC is at a more effective state of readiness than the UUA with respect to alignment of its mission and organizational capabilities for disaster response. UUSC has both a program unit with personnel and a programmatic framework for disasters. The enormity of the Katrina disaster certainly strained the organizational resources of the UUSC. To refine its approach toward and readiness for domestic disasters, the UUSC could further examine organizational stress points and new opportunities for its mission revealed through the Gulf Coast relief effort.*
- ☆ *Both the UUA and UUSC should look toward developing flexible and scalable organizational structures and processes for domestic disaster response. Targeted use of skilled temporary contract personnel would be one important element of such an approach.*
- ☆ *Both UUA and UUSC could look toward more effective leveraging of resources for disaster response by further strategic development of their partnership and through strategic partnerships with appropriate other faith-based and/or human rights/community service organizations.*

Learnings from this assessment suggest a staged approach to moving toward effective institutional disaster response for the future. **It is recommended that the UUA form a cross-organizational study team to undertake the Learning, Research, Reflection and early Planning stages outlined below, and that the work of such a study team transition to a more permanent organizational entity to complete the Planning stage and to carry out and coordinate the organizational infrastructure and systems changes of the Building/Preparation stage.** This should not be part-time work added to schedules of people with other full-time responsibilities. **The core of the team should be hired or seconded for its duration. Specific experience in organizational disaster preparedness and response, particularly with religious denominations should be sought for this study team.**

This staged approach is presented from the perspective of institutional needs of the UUA in terms of disaster response readiness, and are aimed specifically at domestic (N. American) disasters that directly impact UU congregations and their communities. The

UUSC could selectively consider aspects of these recommendations as appropriate, and would join with the UUA in certain steps as noted below. The UUA study team could certainly benefit from UUSC expertise.

The recommended staged approach is offered as an initial guide for such a study team. They would be expected to revise or replace it as their work proceeds. Although engagement in the first three stages (*Learning – Research – Reflection*) can proceed simultaneously, as can aspects of the latter two (*Planning – Building/Preparation*), it would be ill-advised to embark on serious planning and building/preparation without a solid foundation of learning, research and reflection. Disaster preparedness work is iterative. Organizations can anticipate repeating the stages of this recommended process in the aftermath of each disaster response. Research, planning and preparedness (particularly “evangelizing”) would be ongoing work for organizations that see disaster response as part of their mission. It is this author’s estimation that with appropriate resources dedicated to the task, initial plans and basic build/preparation steps could be operational within 18 months.

I. Learning

This study represents one attempt to identify lessons from the UUA-UUSC Katrina response that can be useful to future disaster preparation and response. The UUA Trauma Response Ministry has also been conducting an assessment of its roles and readiness in light of its experience in the Katrina response. Individual offices within the UUA and UUSC, as well as particular UUA districts and congregations, could be encouraged to conduct and share assessments of their roles in response to Katrina. The purpose should be to highlight particular lessons and questions that could improve effectiveness of future disaster preparation and response.

II. Research

The aftermaths of 9/11, other major disasters worldwide (including hurricanes Katrina and Rita), the war on terror, and threatened effects of climate change have contributed to governmental, NGO, industry and faith-based initiatives to increase public awareness of and facilitate preparation for large-scale disasters. Appendix H lists just a small sample of sources. I encourage a UUA team to seek out and study sources most applicable to discerning our religious institutional role in disaster response. Particularly, research could help gain appreciation for:

1. **Types of disasters:**
 - A. **NATURAL:** Hurricanes, Tornados, Floods, Fires, Pandemics/Epidemics
 - B. **UNNATURAL:** Terrorism, Bomb Threats, Explosions, Hazardous Materials
2. **Differences in regional/local susceptibilities to different types of disasters**

3. **Stages of Disaster**
 - A. **Preparedness**
 - B. **Event** -- early emergency response, early assessment of scope & response
 - C. **Relief** -- weeks
 - D. **Short Term Recovery** -- months
 - E. **Long Term Recovery** – years

4. **Identities, roles, capabilities and experiences of other faith-based organizations and governmental/civic agencies in disaster response** -- *The National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) is a useful resource to begin identifying and researching such organizations. See Appendix H.i for a complete list and contact information of NVOAD member and Friends of VOAD organizations.*

5. **Anticipate future needs for disaster response**

III. Reflection

Prepared with lessons from the Katrina response and outside research UUA leadership should look inward to:

1. **Characterize the organizational mission in terms of disaster preparation and response**

2. **Identify the organizational capabilities (resources, strengths and gaps) in regard to disaster preparation and response**

3. **Link mission to anticipated needs & organizational capabilities**

It is anticipated that this reflective work would involve the UUA Board in terms of defining mission and priorities (“ends”) related to disaster response and the Administration in terms of identifying organizational capabilities and linking mission to anticipated needs and capabilities.

IV. Planning

From articulation of mission, organizational capabilities and anticipated needs in disaster response, the UUA Administration should look to create a formal organizational home for domestic disaster preparation and response, which would take leadership responsibility for plans, preparation and response coordination. Such UUA office and its UUSC counterpart should separately and jointly, as appropriate, consider aspects of planning including:

1. **Response decision policies** – *define authorities and procedures for disaster response declarations and decisions including policies around establishment and use of targeted fundraising (see Appendix G.viii for UUA and UUSC policies & procedures approved in 2006 regarding disaster response);*

2. **UUA-UUSC protocols** – *define circumstances, roles and responsibilities and coordination procedures for joint UUA-UUSC disaster response including joint fundraising (see Appendix G.viii for UUA and UUSC policies & procedures approved in 2006 regarding disaster response);*
3. **Communication plans, protocols and systems** – *clearly established responsibilities for and lines of communication to include on-the-ground in the disaster locale, institutional center(s) of coordination and support, and the wider UU community; planned roles and protocols for official electronic (websites, email lists) and print communications; assessment of needs for special communications equipment in certain disaster circumstances;*
4. **Fundraising & fund distribution policies & plan(s)** – *established policies, procedures and systems for rapid call, collection and tracking of donations with clearly communicated purpose(s); fund distribution policies and procedures flexible for the scope and location of the disaster;*
5. **Plan(s) by types, stages & locations of disasters** – *disaster plans must be inherently adaptable and scalable to effectively address the wide range of situations and needs resulting from disaster events. Some of the elements to address in plans include:*
 - A. **Scalable organization & staffing** – *depending upon scope and stage, disaster response is largely staffed by temporary and/or volunteer expertise and labor. Need to define organizational structure and staffing adaptable to the nature, scale and stage of the disaster. Procedures for “borrowing” expertise from other parts of the larger UUA and UUSC institution need to be defined.*
 - B. **Organizational & individual roles** – *define who will do what; who will have specific authority and accountability.*
 - C. **Roles of other faith-based, human rights, and community organizations and government service agencies in response** – *effectiveness of response will be greatly enhanced by well communicated understanding of the roles and expertise accessible in other organizations and agencies, and how the UUA/UUSC response can best access and leverage these resources for its purposes in a disaster response. The National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) is a useful resource to begin identifying and researching such other organizations. See Appendix H.i for a complete list and contact information of NVOAD member and Friends of VOAD organizations.*

- D. **Inter- & intra-organizational relationships & coordination** – *define how resources from distinct institutional/organizational pieces of the UUA including congregations, districts, headquarters and functional departments will relate and be coordinated in a disaster response; similarly define relationships and coordination between UUA and UUSC resources, as well as specific outside organizations and agencies that UUA/UUSC may align with in a disaster response.*

V. Building / Preparation

From the framework of mission, policies, procedures and adaptable plans the UUA and UUSC can build the capabilities and prepare their organizations for more effective disaster response. Some of the actions for effective UUA/UUSC disaster preparedness should include:

1. **Establish a permanent disaster reserve fund** – *UUs responded the disaster spawned by Hurricane Katrina with unprecedented generosity, which has yielded considerable relief and recovery to affected congregations and communities. We know that the enormous scope of and the deeper social and moral factors exposed by the Katrina disaster contributed to the scale of giving to this relief cause. More confined disasters, disasters that occur soon after other disasters (e.g. Hurricane Rita; 2004-05 Florida hurricanes), and disasters that capture less media coverage understandably yield less giving. A permanent disaster reserve fund could help provide basic relief and recovery for response to all disasters that meet UUA and UUSC declared mission- and capability-based criteria, and allow for immediate deployment of resources before dedicated fundraising kicks in. Furthermore, a disaster reserve fund could underwrite ongoing training and awareness efforts to build response capabilities.*
2. **Build & train organizational infrastructure & systems** – *supported by a disaster response office within the UUA headquarter organization steps such as the following should be pursued:*
 - A. **Prepare adaptable job descriptions** – *for essential parts of the disaster response organization;*
 - B. **Create standard contracts for temporary contractors/consultants** – *be prepared to quickly and appropriately deploy skilled resources at any stage of a disaster;*
 - C. **Recruit & train skilled corps of volunteers and contractors** – *specific skills highlighted in this assessment include trauma/crisis ministers, project/program managers, volunteer coordinators, medical professionals, social workers, building trades, congregational consultants, and more;*

- D. **Recruit & train robust trauma ministry team** – *a central ministry in disaster response that must have adequate immediate and long-term capabilities, and must be coordinated with the institutional response to disaster;*
 - E. **Cultivate “concentric ring” organizational structure & systems** – *for example:*
 - *Build regional / district disaster preparedness plans*
 - *Build congregational / community preparedness plans*
 - *Recruit & train district, cluster, and congregation volunteer disaster coordinators*
 - F. **Identify and establish roles for “flagship” churches in all regions of the country** – *sizeable, healthy congregations that are near but not adversely affected by a disaster can play vital leadership roles and serve as staging centers for response to disasters (example of the Unitarian Church of Baton Rouge in response to the Katrina disaster);*
 - G. **Develop and integrate a “partner church” program into disaster response plans** – *draft descriptions of roles and protocols for partner churches;*
 - H. **Build communications infrastructure** – *establish information center protocols and website readiness; procure satellite phones*
3. **Evangelize** -- *Even in the wake of Katrina most individuals and congregations are not motivated to prepare for disaster. If disaster response is part of our religious calling and institutional purpose, then explore and implement ways to lead the Association of Congregations toward meaningful and effective disaster preparedness.*