

## Lesson 1: Religious and Cultural Communities as a Cornerstone of the Whole Community

### Welcome!

In 2011, as FEMA Administrator, W. Craig Fugate began to promulgate the Whole Community Concept. Based on this concept, he stated that "When a disaster strikes, the initial services provided may not come from government, but rather from churches, synagogues, mosques and other faith-based and community organizations."

*"Improving the Nation's Response to Catastrophic Disasters: How to Minimize Costs and Streamline our Emergency Management Programs"* – W. Craig Fugate, March 30, 2011.

Based on the idea that religious and cultural communities are part of the Whole Community, the **DHS Center for Faith-based & Neighborhood Partnerships** works to form partnerships between the Federal Government and faith-based and neighborhood organizations to more effectively serve Americans in need.

As part of this effort, this course has been developed to provide emergency management professionals and faith and community leaders active in disaster with the literacy and competency tools needed to effectively engage religious and cultural groups both pre- and post-disaster.

Please note that the information in this course is not intended to be an exhaustive review of all religious and cultural issues. With this in mind, we are exploring ways to provide periodic updates as appropriate.

### Course Goals

The goals of this course are to:

- Provide students with an understanding of the unique needs and strengths of diverse religious and cultural groups in disaster
- Give the student an understanding of how to best leverage strengths and support needs of such groups in disaster operations
- Provide specific training on how to effectively integrate such groups in disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation

### Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Explain why we engage religious and cultural communities in disaster, and how religious and cultural diversity and practice is not only protected by law but how it strengthens emergency management's capabilities.
- Define the meaning of religious and cultural literacy and competency in disaster management
- Describe how religious and cultural language differs from government culture and language.
- Identify the skills needed to competently engage religious and cultural leaders and groups in the field.
- Describe each step in the six step "LEADER" process.

## Lesson Overview

This lesson provides an introduction to the Whole Community concept, the policy and directives associated with diversity, and how diversity strengthens emergency management's capabilities.

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe how religious and cultural communities are a vital part of "whole communities" and why community engagement is essential in disaster response.
- Identify and explain the assets faith and cultural communities bring to the whole community.

## Whole Community

Every facet of society must be involved in preparing for, protecting against, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating any and all disasters. The Federal Government is only one part of this overall society.

This **whole community** approach to emergency management ensures that solutions that serve the entire community are implemented, while also making sure that all the resources the different members of the community bring to the table are leveraged. This includes those in State and local governments, Tribal governments, faith-based groups, and other non-governmental and private-sector organizations.

## Faith Communities as Part of the Whole Community

The whole community includes not only secular and civic organizations, but also the different religious and cultural groups that are present throughout the United States. To be effective, emergency management personnel must be aware of the different religious and cultural groups they may encounter during a given engagement. Ignoring these religious and cultural institutions not only excludes valuable individuals, but also the vast networks and resources these groups have created – networks and resources that go beyond geographical boundaries. Including these networks greatly increases the resilience created by the whole community approach.

It should be noted that as we discuss the different religious and cultural communities that are included in the whole community, we are neither endorsing a particular set of religious beliefs or practices, nor suggesting that government prioritize faith communities over secular communities and organizations.

This course is intended to increase the field of skills of emergency management personnel when engaging with a segment of the American public that identifies with a particular religion or culture.

As you learn more about these communities, you'll find that religious identity and culture are often tightly interconnected. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish something that is purely cultural from something that is purely religious. As such, understanding these faith and cultural communities, their institutions, and cultural norms is essential for working competently and effectively in a disaster-impacted community.

## **Assets of Faith Communities in Disaster**

Now that we understand the role of faith communities, we can begin to look at the assets these communities bring to the whole community.

### **Mission to Serve**

Faith communities bring the compassion to help people cope and recover.

### **Trust**

Faith communities bring a level of trust to those within the community. This includes the moral authority and legitimacy brought by its leaders, as well as the mission to serve that may be included in its doctrine. It is important to note that moral authority may work both positively and negatively. For example, during Hurricane Katrina, a pastor in Mississippi told congregants that if they followed evacuation orders, then they did not have faith in Jesus.

### **Resources**

Faith communities bring significant resources that may be used during disasters. This includes space, people, money, capacities, and national affiliates.

### **Knowledge**

Faith communities may best understand the needs and desires of those affiliated with the community. Moreover, they are likely the best to communicate with these individuals as they share the same language and culture.

### **Networks**

Communication through the faith communities may extend nationally as they can often reach beyond their congregations into larger geographical areas.

### **Programs**

Faith communities typically already have programs in place to help those in the community, including humanitarian services and disaster volunteers.

### **Presence and Staying Power**

Faith communities typically have longevity in a particular area and will want to see any disaster recovery efforts through until the end.

Perhaps the role of faith communities during and after a disaster was best described by Amy Worden, who wrote:

“From tiny storefront congregations to deep-pocketed denominations, the communities of faith arrived first. In the harrowing hours and days after Hurricane Katrina, when survivors roamed the desolate streets in search of water, food and medicine, church groups...provided dazed residents with their first hot meal, their first clean water, their first aspirin.”

*FAITH IN ACTION Faith-based groups early and enduring Before agencies aided Katrina's victims, religious groups did - and still do.- Amy Worden, Philadelphia Inquirer, August 23, 2006*

### **Lesson Summary**

This lesson provided an introduction to the Whole Community concept, the policy and directives associated with diversity, and how diversity strengthens FEMA's capabilities.

You should now be able to:

- Describe how religious and cultural communities are a vital part of "whole communities" and why community engagement is essential in disaster response.
- Identify and explain the assets faith and cultural communities bring to the whole community.

## Lesson 2: The Value, Landscape, and Language of Religious and Cultural Communities in Disasters

### Lesson Overview

This lesson provides an overview of literacy and competency in relation to religion and culture. This includes a discussion on the role religion plays throughout the United States, as well as the key partners that may be engaged during a disaster operation. Additionally, we will look at the language used in these communities.

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Differentiate between literacy and competency.
- Recognize the diversity of the U.S. religious and cultural landscape.
- Describe the key partners that may be engaged during disaster operations.
- Successfully engage religious and cultural communities by using appropriate vocabulary.

### Literacy and Competency

In the previous lesson, we discussed in general why it's so important for emergency management professionals to develop religious and cultural literacy and competency. But what exactly do we mean when we use the terms "literacy" and "competency?"

**Religious Literacy** is a basic understanding of the history, sacred texts, beliefs, rituals, and current manifestations of multiple faith traditions. Here, literacy refers to the ability to understand the intersection of religious people and the social, political, and cultural life of the larger communities they inhabit.

**Religious Competency** is the ability to navigate and engage each faith community as a trusted, knowledgeable, and effective partner in a disaster setting.

In short, to possess religious competency, you need to possess a level of religious literacy. A basic understanding of the different religions and cultures will enable you to effectively engage with these groups.

Religious literacy is:

- Knowing and understanding the community where you work
- Understanding the needs, concerns and missions of your partners both locally and nationally

Religious literacy is NOT:

- Becoming a scholar in the field
- Serving only your own religious community

Religious competency is:

- Providing culturally and religiously appropriate disaster services to the whole community
- Relationship-building that is trustworthy and sustainable
- Being more effective in the field

Religious competency is NOT:

- Checking the box
- Being politically correct
- Meeting so-called “inappropriate” needs

By obtaining religious competency, you are not simply meeting “special” or “inappropriate” needs. These are core needs that will enable you to effective work in the field.

One analogy is that of a job interview. You would not go to a job interview knowing nothing about the company you are interviewing with. Instead, you would prepare by conducting the appropriate level of research so that you are well-informed for the interview.

Before we move on to the next subject, it should be noted that religious competency isn’t simply a static skill – you can’t learn it all and be done. This is because expression of culture and religion are always changing and often differ among communities.

Because of this, you will need to keep learning about different religions and cultures throughout your career. You’ll need to challenge yourself to build upon the skills and knowledge you already possess in order to improve upon what you and your colleagues are doing in the field.

## **Role of Religion**

So far in this lesson, we’ve looked at literacy and competency, the difference between the two, and why competency is important. But why focus on religion?

Religion plays a central role in the lives of most Americans.

- 77% of Americans are affiliated with a religious tradition (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life U.S. Religious Landscape Survey (2014), <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports>).
- 38% of Americans would expect to rely on the faith-based community for assistance in the first 72 hours after a disaster (“[Preparedness in America](#),” FEMA, August 2014).

In terms of numbers, there are approximately 345,000 congregations in the U.S., compared to 105,000 schools/universities. In fact, congregations are second only to retail stores and shops in the United States.

## **Religious Diversity in the US**

While 71% of Americans identify as Christian, there are nearly 200 denominations and religious traditions in the US with representation from almost every major world religion. This brings social, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity to both urban and rural settings.

For example, consider Arizona. The second largest religion practiced in Arizona is actually Hinduism. Another example is Mississippi, which has Islam as its second largest religion.

The list below presents the second largest religion in each state.

<b>State</b>	<b>Second Largest Religion</b>
Alabama	Islam
Alaska	Buddhism
Arizona	Hinduism
Arkansas	Islam
California	Buddhism
Colorado	Buddhism
Connecticut	Judaism
Delaware	Hinduism
District of Columbia	Judaism
Florida	Islam
Georgia	Islam
Hawaii	Buddhism
Idaho	Buddhism
Illinois	Islam
Indiana	Islam
Iowa	Islam
Kansas	Buddhism
Kentucky	Islam
Louisiana	Islam
Maine	Judaism
Maryland	Judaism
Massachusetts	Judaism
Michigan	Islam
Minnesota	Judaism
Mississippi	Islam
Missouri	Judaism
Montana	Buddhism
Nebraska	Islam
Nevada	Buddhism
New Hampshire	Judaism
New Jersey	Judaism
New Mexico	Buddhism
New York	Judaism
North Carolina	Islam
North Dakota	Islam
Ohio	Judaism
Oklahoma	Buddhism
Oregon	Buddhism
Pennsylvania	Judaism
Rhode Island	Judaism
South Carolina	Baha'i
South Dakota	Islam
Tennessee	Judaism
Texas	Islam

State	Second Largest Religion
Utah	Buddhism
Vermont	Judaism
Virginia	Islam
Washington	Buddhism
West Virginia	Islam
Wisconsin	Islam
Wyoming	Islam

Similarly, individual counties within the states will differ in terms of their populations. While Christianity is the largest religious group in all counties, the second largest tradition changes depending on where you are.

One example is Erie County in New York, where Buffalo is located. Here, the second largest tradition is Islam.

Another example is Shelby County in Tennessee, where Memphis is located. In this county, Judaism is the largest non-Christian tradition.

These examples illustrate the level of diversity that exists throughout the United States. This diversity often brings with it complex perspectives on government as well as disaster response and preparedness.

### **Faith Communities**

When considering the vast number of congregations and the role they play in American society, it should come as no surprise that faith transcends worship areas. People of faith may live, work, and worship in three different geographic areas. However, it's important to understand that faith communities are more than just congregations.

### **Congregations**

Congregations are what you would think of when you think of churches, mosques, and synagogues. However, congregations refer to the people, and not the buildings.

### **Denominations and Judicatories**

Denominations and judicatories are groups within a religion. For example, Eastern Orthodox is a denomination of Christianity.

### **Federations, Networks, Conferences, and Associations**

Federations, networks, conferences, and associations are groups that include members of different religions working toward a common goal.

### **Schools, Colleges, and Theological Institutions**

Schools, colleges, and theological institutions are secondary or post-secondary educational facilities that enable students to develop and explore their religious beliefs.

### **Social Service Organizations**

Social service organizations offer benefits and facilities such as education, food subsidies, health care, job training, and subsidized housing.

## Hospitals and Clinics

Several hospitals and clinics offer health care services that may have a basis in religious ideology.

## Burial Societies and Cemeteries

Burial societies and cemeteries are organizations of people who join together for a common financial or social purpose, often based upon a shared religion.

## Disaster Human Services Organizations

Disaster human services organizations help ensure continued service delivery when emergency events disrupt services and address unmet human services needs created or exacerbated by the disaster. Many of these organizations operate under religious mission to serve. One example is the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

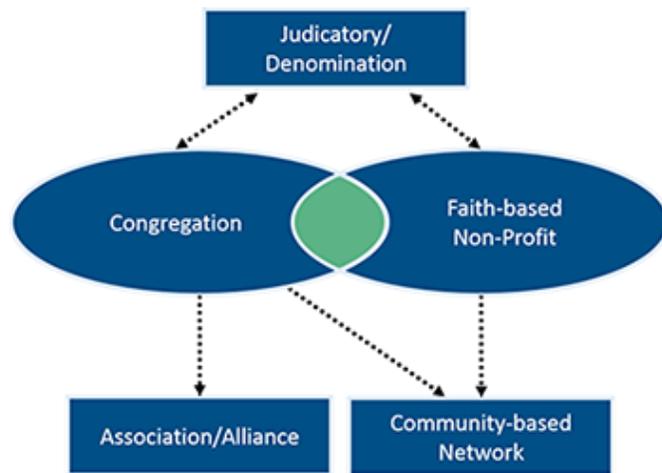
## Clubs and Youth Groups

Clubs and youth groups are organizations of people, usually under the sponsorship of a church, who will work for the common good of the community.

## Interrelationships

The interrelationship among denominations, congregations, and other organizations is shown here. It should be noted that congregations have affiliations with national faith-based organizations, but these links are not always strong.

Oftentimes, when a disaster occurs, a local organization known as a Long Term Recovery Organization (LTRO) will form. An LTRO is typically made up of faith communities, including congregations. It is important to include diverse groups in the LTRO role who are not NVOADS. By including these diverse groups, it increases the level of outreach to the community.



## Key Partners in Emergency Management

**National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization that builds resiliency in communities nationwide. It serves as the forum where organizations share knowledge and resources throughout the disaster to help disaster survivors and their communities.

A majority of the national members of NVOAD have a religious affiliation (approximately 36 of 57 as of October 2015). Furthermore, local congregations are among the most visible and likely sources of aid and trusted information post-disaster. As a result, many disaster lifecycle operations are led, funded, and staffed by those who are active in the faith communities, including NVOAD members.

In the immediate aftermath of hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma, it was clear that the emergency management community needed to engage Houses of Worship and Emerging Cultural Communities in all stages of the disaster sequence. Houses of Worship and Emerging Cultural Communities are those organizations where groups of people come together to perform acts of devotion veneration, or religious or cultural study.

In 2006, the **DHS Center for Faith-based & Neighborhood Partnerships (DHS Center)** was created by executive order to help emergency managers effectively engage with these groups. The DHS Center delivers training and technical assistance to faith and community-based organizations, providing subject-matter expertise to help communities successfully partner with other emergency management components.

### **Careful! Terminology Can Be Confusing**

In this lesson, we've discussed what religious and cultural competency means and why it's so important. So how do we actually improve our religious and cultural competency? The first step is to start speaking the same language as those you are trying to help. By using the same words and the same terms that the affected individuals use, you will be better able to communicate and make a difference.

### **Inclusive Terms**

When considering the terminology that should be used, it is important to use the terms that are inclusive and resonate with all your stakeholders. Let's take a look at terms that can be used to ensure your messages are as inclusive as possible.

#### **Clergy vs. Religious Leaders**

*Clergy* refers only to ordained, often Christian leaders. However, not all religions have clergy. Examples of religions that do not have clergy are Islam and Sikh. On the other hand, all religious traditions have *Religious Leaders*, whether they are ordained or not.

#### **Church vs. House of Worship**

A *Church* is the building where most Christian denominations worship. On the other hand, a *House of Worship* is the building where adherents of a given religion worship. Houses of worship include not only churches, but also gurdwaras, mosques, synagogues, temples, and so on.

#### **House of Worship vs. Congregation**

A *House of Worship* refers to the building, while a *Congregation* refers to the people.

#### **Faith Community vs. Faith Communities**

A *Faith Community* (or Religious Sector) is an amalgamation of many groups with varying beliefs. It is best to avoid this term. However, the term *Faith Communities* acknowledges the existence of many groups with varying beliefs.

### **Additional Terms**

In addition to ensuring that the terms you are using are inclusive, it is also important to use terms that ensure a shared understanding.

### **FBO, NGO, and CBO**

Terms like FBO (Faith-based Organization), NGO (Non-government Organization), and CBO (Community-based Organization) are rarely used by faith communities when referring to themselves. It is best to avoid these terms.

### **Faith-based Social Services**

*Faith-based Social Services* is a term that includes programs run by faith-based organizations, such as soup kitchens, shelters, and job programs.

### **Ecumenical**

*Ecumenical* refers to multiple Christian organizations, and does not include non-Christian faiths.

### **Inter-religious**

*Inter-religious* describes multiple faith communities meeting or gathering together, but not combining religious doctrine, liturgy, or beliefs.

### **Interfaith**

*Interfaith* describes multiple faith communities doing something religious together, such as prayer or a worship service.

### **Multi-faith**

*Multi-faith* refers to groups doing something together within their own belief system.

## **Use of Acronyms**

The language used by FEMA and other Emergency Management organizations may be significantly different than the language used in the affected faith communities. The FEMA Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Terms (FAAT) list has 6200 acronyms and is 70 pages long. Using these acronyms when engaging faith communities will likely create a barrier to understanding and hamper engagement efforts.

For example, the FEMA term for a congregation is an FBO (Faith-based Organization). However, those in the congregation do not talk about themselves being part of an FBO. They talk about themselves being a congregation. As a result, any flyers used for outreach that contain the acronym FBO will likely be ignored.

In many cases, there are acronyms that are used by the government that may mean something entirely different when used in religious communities. Below are a few examples where the use of the acronym alone may lead to confusion.

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Religious Community</b>	<b>FAAT</b>
CWS	Church World Service	Compressed Work Schedule
PDA	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	Preliminary Damage Assessment
TSA	The Salvation Army	Transportation Security Administration

## **Lesson Summary**

In this lesson, we discussed literacy and competency in relation to religion and culture. This included a discussion on the role religion plays throughout the United States, as well as the key partners that may be engaged in disaster operations. Additionally, we discussed the language used in these communities.

You should now be able to:

- Differentiate between literacy and competency.
- Recognize the diversity of the U.S. religious and cultural landscape.
- Describe the key partners that may be engaged during disaster operations.
- Successfully engage religious and cultural communities by using appropriate vocabulary.

## Lesson 3: Tip Sheets and Field Skills for Successful Engagement

### Lesson Overview

In this lesson, we will introduce and refer to the Faith Community Engagement Tip Sheets that are available. As part of this discussion, we will present the ten field skills that are to be used to successfully engage those with differing religions and cultures.

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Use the tip sheets in preparing for engagement with diverse groups
- Describe the ten field skills for successful engagement
  1. Identifying religious symbols on homes and houses of worship
  2. Scheduling meetings
  3. Knowing whether there are any meeting customs or etiquette to be followed
  4. Knowing what clothing to wear
  5. Properly conducting door-to-door outreach
  6. Greeting religious leaders appropriately
  7. Appropriate physical interaction
  8. Knowing the etiquette for footwear and head covering
  9. Knowing the etiquette surrounding outreach in the context of worship services.
  10. Provision of food in a disaster setting

### Faith Community Engagement Tip Sheets

To help facilitate successful engagement with faith communities, FEMA has developed several tip sheets that provide key information about the different communities such as terminology, leadership, and etiquette.

#### Engagement Best Practices:

- Creating an Engagement Plan
- Cultural Competency Tips
- Resources and Tools

#### Religious Leader Engagement Tip Sheets:

- Buddhist
- Christian
  - African American Church Protestant
  - Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon)
  - Evangelical Megachurch
  - Latino Protestant
  - Orthodox Christian
  - Protestant
  - Roman Catholic
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh

## **An Important Principle to Remember**

Before we take a look at the ten field skills, it is important to understand the primary principle of religious and cultural competency:

### **If unsure, ASK.**

If you do not know or are unsure of something, remember to practice active listening and ask questions. It is better to ask than to make a mistake and offend those you are trying to help.

## **1. Identifying Religious Symbols**

The first field skill is identifying religious symbols on homes and houses of worship. Being able to recognize these symbols will help you identify who is or was living in the home. Furthermore, identifying these symbols will provide you with a starting point for determining appropriate feeding, interaction, mass care, mass fatality management, and appropriate days of the week for engagement.

Let's begin by taking a look at the more familiar symbols.

### **Christianity**



The most familiar Christian symbol is the Cross. The symbol is represented as the crossing of two lines at right angles, with the shorter horizontal line intersecting a longer vertical line above the midpoint

### **Buddhism**



The most familiar Buddhist symbol is the representation of Gautama Buddha, seated in the lotus position with the legs crossed such that the feet are placed on the opposing thighs.

### **Judaism**



The most familiar Jewish symbol is the Star of David. This symbol is the compound of two equilateral triangles.

### **Hinduism**



The most familiar Hindu symbol is the representation of Ganesha, which is a God with the head of an elephant.

## Islam



The most familiar symbol of Islam is the crescent moon with a five-pointed star.

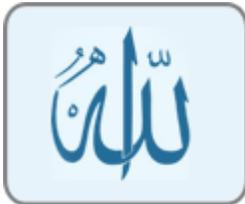
## Roman Catholicism and Christian Orthodox



The most familiar symbol of Roman Catholicism and Christian Orthodox churches is the crucifix. The crucifix is a cross with an image of Jesus attached to it.

Below are some of the less familiar symbols.

## Allah



This Islamic symbol is the Arabic script of the word "Allah."

## Chai



This Jewish symbol is a Hebrew word that means "life." This symbol is made of the Hebrew letters Chet and Yod.

## Chi-Rho



This Christian symbol is the superimposition of the Greek Letters Chi and Rho, which are the first two letters in the Greek spelling of Christ.

### **Dharma Wheel**



This Buddhist symbol is a chariot wheel made up of a hub, a varying number of spokes, and a rim.

### **Faravahar**



This symbol of Zoroastrianism depicts a winged disc with a human bust on top.

### **Khanda**



This Sikh symbol is made up of three different items: a double-edged sword in the center; a chakkar, which is circular throwing weapon; and two single-edged swords, or kirpans, which are crossed at the bottom and sit on either side of the chakkar.

### **Mezuzah**



This Jewish symbol is a piece of parchment inscribed with specific Hebrew verses from the Torah.

### **Om**



This symbol is used in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. The symbol itself is a syllable written in Devanagari, which is used to write Hindi, among other languages.

### Gammadion Cross



This symbol, used in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, is an equilateral cross with its four legs bent at 90 degrees. It is also known as a Manji or Swastika. The symbol was in use for many years as a religious symbol before it was used by the Nazis.

### Torii Gate



This Shinto symbol represents a gate with two vertical pillars with a horizontal post, usually curved upward, that stretches wider than the pillars. A second horizontal post typically appears below the first, which may or may not extend past the pillars.

Besides the basic symbols, people often use artifacts or other presentations to display their faiths. These may include Jhandi flags, which indicate a Hindu household, or the the Shrine to St. Mary the Virgin, which indicates a Roman Catholic household.

It should be noted, however, that houses of worship may have changed denominations or faith traditions after being built. Because of this, it is important that you not make assumptions based solely on the appearance of the building.

## 2. Scheduling Meetings

The second field skill involves the protocols for scheduling meetings. Scheduling or pre-planning appointments whenever possible is a good practice. You can schedule time with the appropriate person, confirm the day, location, and time, and ask questions pertaining to attire, length of meeting, and any other helpful information needed for a successful engagement.

When scheduling meeting times, you should ask for meetings on days and times that are not usually designated for worship. Similarly, meetings with multiple faith communities should be scheduled on days that are free from scheduled prayer or other required gatherings. For example, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are good days for all faith leaders. This is because Fridays through Sundays are set aside for prayers or other gatherings, and leaders typically take off on Mondays.

Periods of celebration and/or fasting, such as Pentecost and Ramadan, will also require some flexibility when scheduling meetings. The **Tip Sheets** provide important guidance regarding the best times to schedule meetings. Additional information regarding dates of celebration and/or fasting can be found on <http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>.

In choosing a meeting space, you should select a neutral area, such as a social hall, and avoid using sacred spaces within houses of worship.

## 3. First Meeting Customs and Etiquette

The third field skill is knowing whether there are any meeting customs or etiquette to be followed. Many cultures engage in rituals or relationship building before discussing business, such as traditional hand washing, receiving a blessing, or even engaging in informal conversation. Not engaging in these customs may be considered rude, which will hurt your outreach efforts.

In these situations, you should follow the lead of the religious leader you are meeting with. Additionally, you should make every effort to remain for the full duration of the meeting. If you believe that you may not be able to stay the whole time, be upfront and clear about your time constraints early on in the meeting.

#### **4. What Clothing to Wear**

The fourth field skill is knowing what clothing to wear. By dressing appropriately, you can yield more successful outcomes during an engagement.

While not mandated by policy, it is good practice to wear modest or traditionally appropriate clothing when entering houses of worship. This means clothing that covers your shoulders, knees, or elbows. Additionally, many traditions expect both men and women to fully cover their legs. In other words, short-sleeve shirts and shorts would likely be considered inappropriate.

When in doubt, dress more formally. Business attire or business casual attire would be considered appropriate in most situations.

It may also be possible to observe what others are wearing and model your attire accordingly. When scheduling an appointment, it is best to ask.

#### **5. Door-to-Door Outreach**

The fifth field skill is properly conducting door-to-door outreach. When making contact at a house of worship or community organization, the person who actually answers the door may be religious leader, a staff member, or a lay community member. Do not make any assumptions based on the dress or the appearance of this initial contact. In fact, the style of dress may simply be cultural preference. Individuals who share distinct religious or cultural traditions from the same country of origin may dress similarly.

When conducting door-to-door outreach, ask to speak to the appropriate leader who can speak on behalf of the congregation or community organization. Ideally, you will want to engage the leader who can commit the congregation or its community to partnerships.

It should be noted that the leader you are seeking may or may not be a member of clergy. For example, in some communities, your best contact may be the head of the local food bank.

#### **6. Greeting Religious or Cultural Leaders**

The sixth field skill is greeting religious or cultural leaders appropriately. Properly addressing leaders is a signal to the communities that you respect their chosen leaders and traditions. In general, if you act in a respectful manner, you will be better received.

When greeting religious and/or cultural leaders, use their proper title, such as Father, Imam, Rabbi, President, etc. even if this tradition differs from your own. Showing respect in this manner does not equal endorsement or conformity to another belief system.

If you are unsure what the proper title is, simply ask, "What should I call you?" Or, "How would you like to be addressed?"

In addition to showing respect, it is also important to know the appropriate protocols when greeting religious leaders. These include both words and physical gestures. This is especially important when interacting with senior leaders or elderly community members.

It should be noted that many religious traditions have special greetings used by adherents. While your use of these greetings may be appreciated, they are not required for non-adherents.

## **7. Physical Interaction**

The seventh field skill is appropriate physical interaction. In general, you should not initiate physical interaction. Instead, it is best to wait for the leader or adherent to initiate physical contact. This is because some religious leaders should not be touched, while other leaders can only be touched by members of their religious tradition. Also, some religious leaders cannot be touched at all by members of the opposite gender.

For those who cannot or should not be touched, offering a handshake would be inappropriate. Instead, you should be prepared to offer an alternate greeting, such as placing your right hand over your heart when being introduced.

When interacting with different faith and cultural communities, it is important to understand how they perceive physical contact. Depending on doctrine, theology, or culture, touch can be seen as a friendly gesture, invasive, or even taboo.

What may seem odd in Western culture may be commonplace in other cultures, including handholding by individuals of the same gender, and standing in close proximity. Another example is the use of the left hand in Hinduism and Islam. These religions see the left hand as "unclean;" only the right hand is to be used when eating, offering or receiving something, or shaking hands.

## **8. Footwear and Head Covering Etiquette**

The eighth field skill is the etiquette for footwear and head covering. Different religions and cultures have different expectations regarding footwear and head coverings when homes and houses of worship. Let's look at some examples.

### **Footwear**

- In gurdwaras, mosques, and temples, it is expected that you remove your shoes to respect the way community members treat their space.

### **Head Covering**

- In Jewish and Sikh houses of worship, men should offer to cover their heads.
- In the prayer space of a mosque, women must cover their hair (they can leave their hair uncovered in other areas of the mosque)

When entering a church, and many other houses of worship, you would be expected to remove your hat.

## 9. Outreach in the Context of Worship Services

The ninth field skill involves the etiquette involved with outreach in the context of worship services. While conducting outreach, you may be asked to attend worship services. You may politely decline participation and follow up after the service. Keep in mind that you are there as a guest to observe, not participate.

If you do decide to attend, you should keep the following in mind:

- If you are not going to stay for the entire service, let them know beforehand that you are going to leave early.
- Ask before participating in worship or prayer services, such as candle lighting or incense burning.
- Avoid touching religious items or books unless you are asked to do so.
- Keep any sacred books off the ground.

In some cases, ushers may be available to provide guidance for seating worship participation, and other customs and protocols.

## 10. Provision of Food in a Disaster Setting

The final field skill involves the provision of food in a disaster setting. Religious leaders and people of faith often follow dietary laws or choose to follow specific diets that they will want to continue to follow in the midst of a disaster. These include:

- Halal
- Kosher
- Vegetarian or Vegan

In extremely dire circumstances, there may be a decision made by their religious leaders to allow for the ingestion of foods that does not meet the strict dietary law. However, every effort should be made to provide appropriate food sources.

One way to get ahead of the curve on these issues is to have partners in your disaster community who are experts in the provision of food to certain populations. In all cases, you should ask before bringing non-kosher food into a synagogue, non-halal food into a mosque, or non-vegetarian food into a Gurdwara, Buddhist temple, or Hindu temple.

Let's take a closer look at these diets.

### Halal

There are dietary laws written in the Quran that are followed by many Muslims. These laws categorize foods as **halal** meaning "permitted," and haram, meaning "sinful."

Halal food sources include those meats that have been ritually slaughtered. However, certain meats, such as pork, are considered to be haram. Similarly, alcoholic drinks and other intoxicants are considered to be haram.

When providing food to Muslims, it is important to understand that they will prefer to eat food from halal sources, including caterers, purveyors, and Meals Ready to Eat (MREs).

### **Kosher**

Most Orthodox Jews, Conservative Jews, and some Reform Jews follow **Kosher** dietary laws in accordance with Jewish Law, known as *Halakha*.

Kosher dietary laws include the type of food, how the animal is slaughtered, how the food is prepared, and how the food is served. Kosher animals include cows, sheep, goats, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and most fish. Shellfish and bottom-feeding fish, however, are not considered to be kosher.

When serving kosher food, milk and meat must be kept separate. They must be served at different times, on separate dishes, and using separate utensils.

Most Orthodox Jews and many Conservative Jews will prefer to eat food that has been certified by a nationally recognized Kosher Certification Organization. However, not all kosher certifications are universally accepted. You will need to check with local Rabbis to determine which certifications are acceptable.

### **Vegetarian or Vegan**

Many Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, Seventh-day Adventist, and Sikh adherents choose to follow a **vegetarian or vegan** diet. For Hindus and Jains, vegetarianism is based on the principle of non-violence.

Foods that are eaten by these groups cannot contain gelatin, meat, meat byproducts, or lard. In fact, Jains and some Hindus will also avoid root vegetables, onion, garlic, and other vegetables that involve uprooting the plant in order to consume it.

When providing food to these groups, it is important to understand that they may only eat food from trusted vegetarian or vegan sources, including caterers, purveyors, and Meals Ready to Eat (MREs).

## Lesson Summary

In this lesson, we introduced the Faith Community Engagement Tip Sheets that are available. As part of this discussion, we presented the ten field skills that are to be used to successfully engage those with differing religions and cultures.

You should be able to:

- Use the tip sheets in preparing for engagement with diverse groups
- Describe the ten field skills for successful engagement
  1. Identifying religious symbols on homes and houses of worship
  2. Scheduling meetings
  3. Knowing whether there are any meeting customs or etiquette to be followed
  4. Knowing what clothing to wear
  5. Properly conducting door-to-door outreach
  6. Greeting religious leaders appropriately
  7. Appropriate physical interaction
  8. Knowing the etiquette for footwear and head covering
  9. Knowing the etiquette surrounding outreach in the context of worship services.
  10. Provision of food in a disaster setting

## Lesson 4: Engaging Religious and Cultural Communities through the LEADER Process

### Lesson Overview

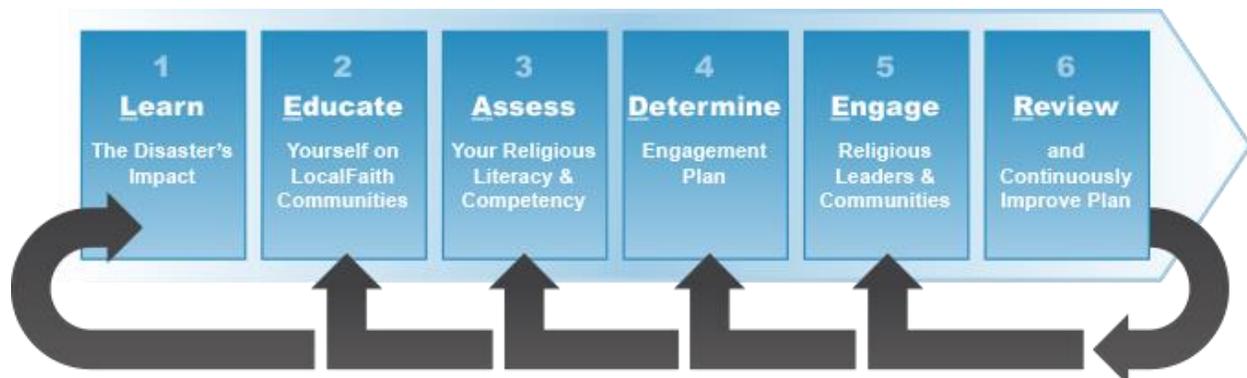
In this lesson, we will discuss the process for engaging faith communities during a disaster. As part of this discussion, we will introduce ways that faith communities can work with FEMA during recovery.

Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain the six step LEADER process for successfully engaging faith communities
- Identify tools and resources for assessing disaster damage and religious and cultural communities in a geographical area
- Determine ways religious and cultural communities can serve as partners
- Determine how to approach religious and cultural communities
- Describe how using religious and cultural hierarchies and networks can serve as force multipliers

### LEADER Process for Engagement

We will discuss the LEADER Process for Engagement, shown here.



#### Step 1: Learn the Impact of the Disaster

Let's begin by looking at the first step: **Learn** the disaster's impact.

First, you will want to determine the areas that were impacted. There are several resources available for this. One of the most widely available tools is Google Crisis Map ([http://google.org/crisismap/weather\\_and\\_events](http://google.org/crisismap/weather_and_events)). These online maps show the latest satellite imagery as well as storm paths, flood zones, shelter locations, and other disaster-related information.

For Federally declared disasters, another useful tool is GeoPlatform (<http://www.geoplatform.gov/>), which gathers data from a partner network of providers, including Federal agencies and their partners in State, local, regional, and Tribal governments, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, industry, and citizens.

Other resources that you may want to access include those made available by the states or localities. If possible, you can also access Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs) and

Geographic Information System (GIS) maps from FEMA, state and local emergency management, or the American Red Cross.

Next, you'll want to determine how the people in those areas were impacted and what their current needs are.

You can obtain some of this information by reviewing the local government and/or voluntary agency Situation Reports that are available.

## **Step 2: Educate Yourself on Local Faith Communities**

Now let's look at the second step: **Educate** Yourself on Local Faith Communities.

To obtain information regarding the local congregations and community, and how they may be able to assist, contact your local emergency management department regarding existing faith community relationships. You may also contact the State or Local faith community liaison in the offices of your Governor or Mayor.

As you receive this information, you may want to consider the types of data gathered by the congregations themselves and how this data can assist with ongoing reporting.

There are additional resources from which you can obtain data regarding local faith communities. These include:

- Local or county Emergency Management Divisions (EMDs)
- Emergency management office partnerships coordinator
- Faith-based social service providers
- Designated state and local faith-based liaison offices
- Designated county and city departments' faith-based liaisons
- Interfaith centers and disaster interfaiths
- Networks, associations, conferences, religious denominations, and governing bodies
- Faith leaders

At the state and Federal level, there are additional resources that can provide information regarding faith communities.

### **VAL**

One resource is the State/Regional Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL). They can provide assistance in identifying key groups and existing partnerships, such as VOADs and Long-Term Recovery Organizations (LTROs). The Voluntary Agency Liaison Brochure can be found here: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/26074>.

### **DHS Center**

For field support from headquarters, you can contact the DHS Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships (DHS Center). The DHS Center will assist you by compiling data on local faith communities. More information regarding the DHS Center can be found here: <http://www.dhs.gov/dhs-center-faith-based-neighborhood-partnerships>.

### **ASARB**

A third resource is the Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB). They can provide county-level data regarding faith communities. Every ten years, they issue a Religious Congregations and Membership Study, which includes the number of:

- Congregations for different religious traditions
- Adherents for religious traditions

It should be noted, however, that the data they provide is self-reported and may underestimate minority or non-English speaking congregations. More information about ASARB can be found here: <http://www.asarb.org/>.

Once you've obtained your data, you will need to review the information received. As you do so, be sure to leave any assumptions behind. The language and cultural skills required might surprise you. For example, in Oklahoma, the most common country of origin other than Mexico is Myanmar.

As you continue to review your data, you should note some of the logistical considerations that may be necessary, such as language support or special dietary requirements.

Once you've reviewed the data you have collected, the first question will want to ask is:

What faith communities are in or serve the affected area?

As you do this initial assessment, you will want to determine the structure of these organizations.

- Do they possess a top-down structure?
- Are their congregations autonomous?

It's important to understand that some houses of worship and community organizations may be structured from the top down with the lead organization providing leadership, while the local house of worship or community organization is autonomous when it comes to specific programs and community outreach.

You will also want to answer several additional questions as you review the data. These questions include:

- Who are key religious leaders and communicators?
  - What are their titles?
  - Are they commissioned or lay?
- What networks and associations exist?
  - What is the role and expertise of each organization?
- What other government agencies work with these communities?
- What connections to national affiliates exist?
- Which groups are not being included or likely to be missed?

At any time, you can refer back to the **Tip Sheets** for more information when determining which questions to ask.

### **Step 3: Assess Your Religious Literacy and Competency**

The third step is to **Assess** your religious literacy and competency.

Once you have determined the religious and cultural groups that exist in the impacted area, you should ask the following questions of yourself and your team:

- Which faith communities do you feel most competent working with?
- Which do you feel you need additional training or knowledge to work effectively with?
- What competencies and literacy knowledge can your team members contribute?
- Where else can you find information that will help you increase your team's religious/cultural literacy and competency?

Remember, you can always refer back to the **Tip Sheets** to help familiarize yourself with impacted groups. Take a look at the Cultural Competency Tip Sheet specifically for more cultural information.

One additional question that you will need to ask yourself is:

**What personal biases or misconceptions might shape your perception of faith communities which differ from your own?**

It is perfectly natural for each of us to have our own hidden biases based on human nature and early learning experiences in our lives. However, it is important to become aware of these biases in order to ensure they don't affect your work in the field.

There are many helpful resources online to help you consider the manifestation and impact of biases in our daily lives.

**Step 4: Determine Engagement Plan**

The fourth step is to **Determine** your engagement plan.

Before you go out into the field, you will want to create a formal process for engaging faith communities. Specifically, you want to answer the following questions:

- Who will be contacted/who is assigned?
- What you will do?
- When it will take place?
- Where it will happen?
- Why? Clearly state the purpose.
- How will you conduct meetings?
- How will you follow up?

In order to answer the questions of who will be contacted, you need to first understand the effect of force multipliers.

**Force multipliers** are those factors that dramatically increase, or multiply, the effectiveness of your efforts.

When you are trying to reach those in the community to provide assistance, it will make more sense and be far more efficient to employ the use of force multipliers rather than trying to reach out to each individual that has been affected.

As we discussed in Lesson 2, one of the assets that faith communities possess is that of their networks. By working with and getting your message to religious leaders, you implement a force multiplier that can reach multiple congregates and others more quickly than you would be able to on your own. For example, many Houses of Worship now have

their own Facebook pages and Twitter accounts that can be used to very quickly reach their congregants.

Keeping the effects of force multipliers in mind, you should first ask:

**Who** will you contact and in what sequence?

Start with your larger force multipliers before going to the individual congregations. Some examples include:

- Local or county Emergency Management Divisions (EMDs)
- Emergency management office partnerships coordinator
- Faith-based social service providers
- Designated state and local faith-based liaison offices
- Designated county and city departments' faith-based liaisons
- Interfaith centers and disaster interfaiths
- Networks, associations, conferences, religious denominations, and governing bodies
- Faith leaders
- FEMA VAL and/or State VAL as VOAD liaison(s)
- DHS Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships via the National Response Coordination Center (NRCC)

**What** will you do?

You will need to work with existing faith communities that convene and coordinate activities in the area. You will also need to share any information you've gathered about faith communities with your team members to eliminate duplication of effort and identify any existing gaps.

You will also want to discuss other people or entities that will attend to provide assistance as part of a town hall format. This may include local politicians, translators, FEMA Individual Assistance, and the Small Business Administration.

You will also need to determine how to best coordinate with faith-based organizations. To do so, you will need to ask:

- What are their core capabilities?
- How have they helped in past?
- What are they doing now?

By understanding this information and providing a continuing dialog with the organization, you can better tailor an approach that will align with their priorities and needs, as well as make the best use of their skills and resources.

Additionally, by understanding their priorities and their specialties, you can develop a customized outreach strategy for each organization. Depending on their strengths and preferences, you may ask them to help through in-person meetings, newsletters, emails, phone calls, or some combination of all these things.

As you approach these organizations, you need keep the following in mind:

## **Government asks, not tasks.**

You cannot force these organizations to do things they may not want to do. Understand that you are asking them to help.

As you ask for assistance, you will want to ensure that you provide any resources that they may need. For example, if you asking a group to distribute information, then you will need to provide the flyers they are to hand out.

### **When** will it take place?

When deciding when your engagement plan will be rolled out, you should request days other than holy days, days of congregational worship, and other major religious or cultural holidays. Keep in mind that many religious leaders have a second job or take a weekday as their day off.

### **Where** will it take place?

When deciding where to hold community meetings, request a space that is neutral. If you choose one religious location, it may mean that groups from other faith traditions may not attend.

### **Why?**

When you hold a meeting, it is important that you clearly state the purpose of the meeting what your objectives are. As part of this, you will need to be clear about what you can and cannot offer, and that you only offer what you can deliver.

As you make commitments, it is important that you follow up promptly and deliver what was offered.

### **How** will meetings be conducted?

The most critical aspect of this is that you conduct meetings with religious and cultural competency. This means ensuring that the process does not favor one community over another. This also means that any speakers and presenters reflect the diversity of faith communities.

As we discussed in Lesson 3, outreach may be conducted in the context of a worship service.

Remember, you can always refer back to the **Tip Sheets** to help familiarize yourself with the faith communities.

Finally, **how** will you follow up?

As you wrap up the meeting, determine the need for subsequent meetings and develop a preliminary schedule. Once the meeting is concluded, share any information learned with

the leadership. Additionally, you will need to continue to communicate with community religious leaders to share any information learned after the meeting.

### **Step 5: Engage Religious Leaders & Communities**

The next step is to **Engage** religious leaders and communities.

As you engage the faith communities and their leaders, you will need to carry out your plan in a religiously literate and competent way. This includes:

- Dressing appropriately
- Using correct titles with common courtesies
- Practicing active listening
  - Ask questions
  - Gauge impact and extent of unmet needs
- Leading from behind
  - Allow faith communities to define their own leadership and determine their representatives
  - Encourage leaders to do the talking when appropriate

In your first meetings, you will need to build relationships and ask about disaster-related needs. Keep in mind that while some may express their needs openly, others may need to be encouraged to do so.

As you work with survivors, you can collaborate with leaders on language translation and/or explaining answers to questions. Also, you will need to report any capabilities and remaining or emerging needs back to the leadership.

If you promised you would deliver something, you will need to return with those deliverables in subsequent meetings.

### **Step 6: Review and Continuously Improve Plan**

The final step is to **Review** and continuously improve your engagement plan.

As your plan is underway, you will need to continue to report community resources using the appropriate mechanisms. As these are found, you can update your plan from Step 4: Determine Engagement Plan.

Also, you will want to keep the lines of communication open with all those involved in order to increase the effectiveness of your plan and to avoid any duplication of effort.

Finally, continue to work on and improve your religious and cultural literacy and competency, as well as improve the literacy and competency of your organization. There are several resources available that will enable you to do so:

- National Institutes of Health (NIH) Clear Communication (<http://www.nih.gov/clearcommunication/culturalcompetency.htm>)

- Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Culture, Language, and Health Literacy (<http://www.hrsa.gov/culturalcompetence/index.html>)
- HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) Center for Linguistic and Cultural Competency in Health Care (<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlid=34>)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) (<http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>)

## Lesson Summary

In this lesson, we discussed the process for engaging faith communities during a disaster. As part of this discussion, we introduced ways that faith communities can work with FEMA during recovery.

You should be able to:

- Explain the six step LEADER process for successfully engaging faith communities
  - **Learn** the disaster's impact
  - **Educate** yourself on local faith communities
  - **Assess** your religious literacy and competency
  - **Determine** engagement plan
  - **Engage** religious leaders and communities
  - **Review** and continuously improve plan
- Identify tools and resources for assessing disaster damage and religious and cultural communities in a geographical area
- Determine ways religious and cultural communities can serve as partners
- Determine how to approach religious and cultural communities
- Describe how using religious and cultural hierarchies and networks can serve as force multipliers