



Making the Most of Your Unmet Needs Assessment

Wednesday, May 8, 2024
11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. CDT

2024 CDBG-DR Problem Solving Clinic
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Presenters



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Learning Objectives

- Attendees will gain insight into what to consider when planning their approach to unmet needs assessment.
- Attendees will understand how to use unmet needs data to plan and implement equitable recovery.
- Attendees will learn why re-assessment is critical and what to consider when re-assessing unmet needs.
- Attendees will learn ways to reduce the administrative burden.

Agenda

- Starting Out Right
- Understanding How the Unmet Needs Assessment Drives Equitable Recovery
- Updating Your Unmet Needs Assessment
- Questions and Answers
- Resources



Starting Out Right

Unmet Needs Assessment Requirements

- Describes how planning expenditures will benefit the HUD-identified most impacted and distressed (MID) areas
- Describes the disaster impacts by type at the lowest level practicable (county/parish, neighborhood/census tract)
- Accounts for the cost and benefits of incorporating hazard mitigation measures to protect against specific identified impacts of future natural hazards

Unmet Needs Assessment Requirements (Cont.)

- Evaluates all aspects of recovery (housing, infrastructure, economic revitalization)
- Accounts for all other forms of assistance available to impacted communities (e.g., projected FEMA funds) and individuals (e.g., estimated insurance)
- Assesses the need for public services (e.g., housing counseling, legal advice, job training) to support housing, infrastructure, and economic revitalization activities

What is the Purpose of an Unmet Needs Assessment?

- Inform project funding allocations and program design
- Assess and re-assess recovery needs over the life of the grant award
- Ensure the needs of vulnerable populations are considered and prioritized
- Anticipate and prepare for future disasters
- Support duplication of benefits analysis

Who Should Be Involved in Developing or Updating an Unmet Needs Assessment?



- Organizations that work with traditionally underserved communities and populations with special needs.
- Volunteer organizations active in disaster (VOADs).
- Members of the public.
- Tip: Create a recovery group involving various stakeholders that will work together and have the authority to make decisions following an event.



Who Should Be Involved in Developing or Updating an Unmet Needs Assessment? (Cont.)



- Public, private, and nonprofit agencies
- Planning, ArcGIS, program management, and community engagement staff
- Stakeholders working in economic development, housing, public facilities, and infrastructure
- Regional or local Continuum of Care partners

Considerations for Gathering Your Unmet Needs Data

- Be more comprehensive than you think you need to be to avoid having to go back for additional data.
- Focus on three areas:
 - Pre-disaster conditions to establish a baseline.
 - Post-disaster conditions to gain insight on direct and indirect impacts and inform short-, medium-, and long-term recovery needs.
 - Additional sources of assistance for each type of recovery activity.
- Consider long-term recovery and mitigation data in the context of broader community priorities and sustainability or green building initiatives.



Considerations for Gathering Your Unmet Needs Data (Cont.)



- Be strategic about using anecdotal data to augment empirical data.
 - Example of empirical data: The number of individuals who applied for FEMA Individual Assistance.
 - Example of anecdotal data: Comments from affected residents describing their greatest challenges with recovery.
- Understand the context and limitations of your data sources.
- Ensure your unmet needs assessment follows the [HUD Review Checklist](#) for your event.
- Re-assess unmet needs regularly throughout the life of the award.





Understanding How the Unmet Needs Assessment Drives Equitable Recovery



Civil Rights Authorities that Apply to CDBG-DR

- Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Section 109 of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974

Fair Housing and Civil Rights Requirements for the CDBG-DR Action Plan

- Include data (number and percentage) for all required groups.
- Provide information for the required subgroups (e.g., Limited English Proficiency (LEP) groups by language spoken).
- Describe how CDBG-DR funds are used in a way consistent with the obligation to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH).
- Describe how the grantee will ensure its planned use of funds does not have an unjustified discriminatory effect on, or fail to benefit, groups in proportion to their needs.
- Include information about the existing barriers to participation in programs, and how the grantee will address them.

What Does it Mean to Collect and Analyze Data Through an Equity Lens?



- Be open to developing or changing your allocations based on the data.
- Design your disaster recovery (DR) activities to address impediments to fair housing identified in your jurisdiction's Assessment of Fair Housing (in addition to meeting disaster tieback requirements).
- Identify where individuals may need additional support, such as legal aid or case management, to participate meaningfully in DR programs.
- Understand that you may need to go beyond traditional means of collecting or interpreting data. This can include methods such as conducting surveys, interviews, or focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of the issues.

Potential Barriers to Collecting Unmet Needs Data and How to Overcome Them



- **Physical accessibility and mobility** – Hold public meetings in accessible spaces with a virtual option, do door-to-door outreach, seek input from disability advocacy organizations, ensure outreach materials are 508-compliant.
- **Language access and linguistic isolation** – Ensure Language Access Plan is updated and followed, provide oral interpretation and translation for program services and documents.
- **Literacy (digital and print)** – Provide outreach materials in paper format or verbally in person or by phone, provide technical assistance to individuals completing forms or surveys.

Potential Barriers to Collecting Unmet Needs Data and How to Overcome Them (Cont.)



- **Displacement or migration** – Seek data on where affected individuals were displaced or migrated to and conduct targeted outreach there, implement more widespread or viral outreach such as social media.
- **Cultural competency** – Work with trusted members of affected communities to conduct outreach and design outreach materials and approach to respect cultural values and traditions.
- **Trauma and disruption** – Ensure outreach is trauma-informed and be sensitive when communicating about the disaster, make the process for sharing input as simple and convenient as possible, avoid requiring unnecessary documents or information in order to participate in the public input process.

How Should Data Insights Drive Equitable Recovery?



- **Allocation decisions** – Invest in recovery activities that will address equity concerns identified in unmet needs assessment.
- **Prioritization criteria** – Establish award priorities for direct benefit programs that serve members of vulnerable populations first.
- **Supportive services** – Use DR funds for public services that enable participation in other DR programs, such as legal services to help homeowners resolve title and heirship issues.
- **Policies and procedures** – These documents should include special accommodations to maximize participation and benefit by vulnerable/underserved groups.
- **Evaluation and refinement** – Routinely evaluate program participation and benefit by vulnerable/underserved groups and adjust program design as necessary.



Updating Your Unmet Needs Assessment

Why Should You Update Your Unmet Needs Assessment Regularly?

- Data collected in the immediate aftermath of a disaster may be incomplete or based on estimates—should be updated with actual figures as soon as available.
- Once recovery programs are launched, program participation can be used to further refine needs and determine if funds should be re-allocated.
- CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT funds permit and even encourage dynamic responses that are appropriate for longer-term needs. Therefore, it is necessary and expected that you continue to update your data and refine your program designs as needs evolve over time.

Building Re-assessment Into Your Program

- Develop a re-assessment schedule and identify who will take ownership of re-assessment.
 - Consider including this information in your CDBG-DR Action Plan so it is easy to implement and promotes accountability.
- Keep data resources and contacts updated and saved in an easy-to-access location.
- Ensure evaluation metrics are built into your programs to provide ongoing insights into evolving needs.

What Milestones May Prompt Re-assessment?

- **Program closed with a remaining balance of funds** – What other needs can you fund with the balance?
- **Program closed with a large pipeline of applicants unserved** – Do you need to allocate additional funds to the program?
- **Program is undersubscribed or having production challenges** – Are the needs being met elsewhere or is it a program design issue?
- **A subsequent disaster occurred in the same area** – Have existing needs been exacerbated by the new disaster?
- **Other funding sources are added or taken away** – Did this create new unmet needs or address some existing needs?

Guided Questions for Unmet Needs Assessment and Re-assessment – Housing

- Has the amount of remaining unmet need changed since other funding sources (FEMA, SBA, insurance) may satisfy some of the needs you identified?
- Are there infrastructure, economic recovery, buyout or other data sets that can further inform how you will meet the unmet housing needs you have identified?
- What are the amounts, deadlines, and statuses of other funding that might be leveraged to address the overall unmet needs you are identifying?
- Are there HUD entitlement programs in your jurisdiction that are already serving needs and/or demonstrating local capacity within your targeted areas that you might “piggyback” on?

Guided Questions for Unmet Needs Assessment and Re-assessment – Public Facilities and Infrastructure

- Are all emergency shelters adequately served by existing infrastructure so that certain shelters are not oversubscribed by virtue of being easier to access?
- Are public facilities and infrastructure accessible to persons with disabilities?
- If recovery will involve constructing affordable housing in high-opportunity areas, are those areas adequately served by infrastructure that supports a variety of transportation options such as public transit and walkable/bikeable streets and sidewalks?
- How might natural or green infrastructure methods be integrated into rebuilding of infrastructure?

Guided Questions for Unmet Needs Assessment and Re-assessment – Public Services

- As you consider your housing programs, what supportive services might be needed to ensure that participants derive maximum program benefit and that program outcomes are sustained long-term? (Examples might include housing counseling, legal advice, fair housing training, or financial literacy coaching.)
- How should public service delivery be designed to accommodate individuals with special needs such as disabilities or limited English proficiency?

Guided Questions for Unmet Needs Assessment and Re-assessment – Economic Revitalization

- Are there areas that are already lacking in critical businesses such as grocery stores and health clinics?
- Is there a pool of qualified contractors who can perform repair and/or reconstruction in areas affected by or at high risk for disasters?
- If displaced individuals are relocating to specific areas, is there an adequate number of jobs as well as goods and services to accommodate the additional population?

Reducing Administrative Burden Takeaways

- Include a broad range of stakeholders and recovery sectors to permit maximum funding flexibility.
- Plan your unmet needs assessment so it can inform your duplication of benefits analysis later.
- Treat the unmet needs assessment as an opportunity to promote equitable recovery and to design programs that fulfill grantee AFFH obligations.
- Build unmet needs re-assessment into your program from the very beginning.





Questions and Answers

Resources

- [CDBG-DR Laws, Regulations and Federal Register Notices](#)
- [CDBG-DR Disaster Impact and Unmet Needs Assessment Kit](#)
- [CDBG-DR Toolkit](#)
- [Fair Housing Considerations in CDBG-DR Action Plans](#)
- [HUD Affirmatively Further Fair Housing Tool \(AFFH-T\)](#)
- [Citizen Participation and Equitable Engagement Toolkit](#)
- [CDBG-DR Comprehensive Citizen Engagement and Implementation Checklist](#)

A photograph of the St. Louis Gateway Arch and the city skyline is framed within a white, irregular hexagonal shape on the left side of the slide. The arch is a large, white, catenary-shaped structure that dominates the left side of the image. In the background, the city skyline of St. Louis is visible, including the Old Courthouse and other buildings. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

Thank You!

If you have any questions, please feel free to send an email to ODR's Policy Division at ODRPolicyDivision@hud.gov.

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Next Session

The next sessions will begin at 1:15 p.m. CDT

Empowering Your Community Through
Workforce Development Initiatives: Grand
Ballroom DEF

Maximizing Mitigation: Showcasing Mitigation
Activities and Approaches: Grand Ballroom
ABC