

SAFE FOR EVERYONE

December 2014

A discussion with the Rochester Somali, Cambodian and Latino communities to identify special needs and assets in planning for an emergency or disaster.



Hazard Mitigation in Rochester Outreach to Explore Special Needs within Immigrant Communities

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Alliance of Chicanos, Hispano, Latino Americans (ACHLA), page 4, festival scene; page 12, Miriam Goodson

Rochester Post Bulletin, page 12, Mohamoud Hamud

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Introduction

Messaging: Easier Said Than Done

Effective communication during emergency management operations is a necessity — and easier said than done.

Including residents in emergency planning and delivering effective messages to them is complex when they are English speakers. But when residents are immigrants and refugees who may not speak English, and who may not read in their native language, planning and communication become considerably more complex.

The City of Rochester Emergency Management is currently engaged in writing an All Hazard Mitigation Plan as part of its overall emergency management efforts. As part of the initial planning process, team leaders viewed outreach to members of the city's three largest cultural groups — the Latino, Somali and Cambodian communities — as integral to thorough emergency planning.

To facilitate this effort, the City of Rochester contracted with ECHO Minnesota to design and execute an outreach strategy.

ECHO's mission is to collaborate with diverse communities to deliver programs and services that help people be healthy, contribute, and succeed. Founded in 2004 by a collaborative of local and state public health and safety agencies, ECHO Minnesota addresses the growing health, safety and emergency information needs of Minnesota's rapidly expanding limited English speaking communities. As a leader in multi-language health, safety, civic engagement and emergency readiness communication, ECHO bridges

the gap for immigrants and refugees in Minnesota. Through close collaborations with health and safety experts, bilingual community leaders and talented Ambassadors, ECHO crafts high quality programming for television and radio broadcast and phone, print, web, DVD and partner relay distribution. Additionally, ECHO provides outreach initiatives that lend themselves to additional methods of bridging relationships between public, private, and non-profit agencies looking for ways to integrate with diverse communities and improve their initiatives.

ECHO's charge in Rochester was to:

- design and implement a plan to assess the effectiveness of current efforts to communicate emergency information within cultural communities
- solicit opinions from community members on possible improvements,
- create a basis for sustainable partnerships between government and limited-English proficiency communities within Rochester, and
- connect city officials with a core group of bi-lingual leaders from each of the Latino, Somali and Cambodian communities willing to continue relationship building with the City of Rochester.

This report documents ECHO's method of approach, lays out what was learned during the research process, and makes recommendations for short- and long-term strategies to communicate effectively with all communities within Rochester.



“Emergency planning and communication conducted solely in English will inevitably leave many Rochester residents uninformed and potentially exposed to injury or loss from man-made or natural disasters.”

Background Rochester: A Diverse Community

Compared to Minnesota as a whole, Rochester is an exceptionally diverse community. Nearly 12 percent of Rochester's total 2010 population was born in another country compared to seven percent in the state as a whole.

The largest immigrant groups within Olmsted County, which includes the City of Rochester (2008 figures), are:

- Hispanic/Latinos (2,959)
- Somalis (2,900)
- Cambodians (1,527)

Within nearly 7,000 Rochester households a language other than English is spoken in the home.

Rochester Language Spoken at Home:

Language	Households	Percent
English	35,886	83.84
Spanish	1,804	4.21
Other Indo-European	1,671	3.9
Asian-Pacific Island	2,020	4.72
Other	1,420	3.2

American Community Survey, 2008-2012, five-year data set

Emergency planning and communication conducted solely in English will inevitably leave many Rochester residents

uninformed and potentially exposed to injury or loss from man-made or natural disasters.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Outreach Recommendations

In its *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook*, FEMA outlines key measures that communities should undertake to reach limited English speakers and immigrant communities. Among these tasks are the following:

Consider stakeholders who should be included in planning:

- Business leaders? Prominent business figures in immigrant communities?
- Nonprofit organizations? In addition to Mutual Assistance Organizations, are there mosques, churches, temples, markets that serve as gathering spots for large numbers of people on a regular basis?
- Opportunities for general public to comment, and to offer granular information about community assets, problem areas, hazard history, and to prioritize mitigation alternatives.

To determine during input process: What input do you need from immigrant communities? Possibilities:

- How best to communicate with members of various cultures in case of emergency, both in terms of language and mode (print, text, school-based systems, posters at stores, presentations at churches, mosques, etc., Facebook or web pages of organizations?)
- Assets that are particularly important within the community but might not be obvious to outsiders.

- Best methods of outreach with details of planning/input. Leaders and focus groups help to develop the plan, but is there also a need for broader participation? Could this come through community fairs, celebrations, through radio or newspapers? Are there important online resources within communities that could be engaged?

Evaluation and reporting back

- Develop a clear strategy for evaluating and incorporating outreach feedback. How will we let people know how their opinions have been used?
- Public opportunity for review and comment on plan: how will this be done in cultural communities?

A Path Toward Effective Planning

The City of Rochester is an international destination for medical care, and it is a place where languages other than English are spoken in thousands of homes. To create a plan that reduces disaster and emergency risk for everyone, the special needs of limited English speakers and cultural communities must be taken into consideration. That is a clear directive from FEMA in its *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook*. But beyond that, the city's Director of Emergency Management, Ken Jones, and Rochester-Olmsted County's Principal Planner, Sandra Goslee, recognize that clear, concise communication with all Rochester households in an emergency is a matter of potential life-and-death consequence, and a responsibility of government.

To meet these obligations, the City of Rochester engaged the expertise of ECHO Minnesota to devise a strategy that would:

- elicit the impressions from members of local cultural communities on current emergency communication,
- identify mitigation and preparedness concerns particular to those communities,
- ask participants for ideas on how to improve planning and messaging to limited English speakers, and
- establish the basis for long-term relationships with Rochester's cultural communities that would improve future planning efforts.

ECHO's goal was to create a manageable process that would answer key questions about:

- perception of hazards within cultural communities,
- concerns particular to specific communities,
- success and failures of current preparedness and emergency communication efforts,
- techniques or programs to get better information to more people, and
- ways to keep members of cultural communities engaged in future planning efforts.

City leaders recognize that clear, concise communication with all Rochester households in an emergency is a matter of potential life-and-death consequence, and a responsibility of government.”

Natural Disaster

Heavy rainfall in 1978 left Rochester inundated. To help reduce the harm from natural disasters, non-English speaking populations need preparedness education delivered in ways that they can understand.



Methodology

A Mix of the Subjective & Objective

Like many efforts to gain information about and within communities, ECHO's process was a mixture of the objective and subjective. By necessity such a process relies on persistence, patience, and a recognition that many of the people who are critical to the success of the project are highly esteemed within their communities, frequently asked to provide assistance to fellow immigrants, extremely busy with their own lives, and are too often asked to participate in public engagement processes that in their view come to nothing.

ECHO's work began by compiling a list of key figures within Rochester's immigrant-serving organizations, plus government services, hospitals and clinics, media outlets and other organizations that could potentially reach into cultural communities. That list of 49 organizations was compiled in early 2014, and included a list of Rochester-area ethnic events, plus potential foundation funders of ongoing work.

In an attempt to create a workable process that would provide a foundation for future efforts, Rochester officials and ECHO decided to limit the initial engagement effort to Rochester's three largest cultural communities — Latinos, Somalis and Cambodians.

The next step was to derive a list of critical participants within these communities. In the spring of 2014, ECHO consulted with Marty Aleman, Public Health Nursing Manager for Olmsted County Public Health Services, who is involved in the activities of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic Rochester group, the Community Alliance for Racial Equality. Working with Aleman, ECHO

compiled a short list of leaders who would bring insight and authority to the engagement effort. ECHO called these potential informants to determine whether they would be willing to participate, and to ask them about others from their communities who should also be included. As a question of process, it is worth noting here that in many instances it was necessary to make repeated phone calls and to send several emails before connecting.

This is a measure of the demands upon the time of the people ECHO called. They are frequently asked to participate in surveys and focus groups, and suspect that yet another survey, focus group or meeting will not prove to be meaningful. Convincing participants that the city and county's intent was serious, and not an instance of bureaucratic t-crossing, added a time-consuming aspect to the project. Respectful, polite persistence is a basic requirement for this type of work.

ECHO set an initial meeting for the evening of May 19, 2014 at the public library, and sent written invitations from Ken Jones and Sandra Goslee to three or four key representatives of each cultural group. These invitations were followed up with an email reminder and a phone call. All of these contacts stressed the importance of cross-cultural emergency communication and the significance of having highly-regarded leaders involved in the process. Among the messages delivered by informants in this meeting were these:

- Leaders felt that more members of their communities should be interviewed in a focus-group like setting to deepen understanding,



Participants said that winter blizzards and extreme cold can come as horrible and dangerous surprises for immigrants from equatorial climates. One solution for people with limited English: education in visual and audio forms.

- Collecting further information in surveys was bound to be difficult given the language considerations and would gather results of limited significance.

Following this meeting ECHO organized individual interviews with key leaders to allow them an opportunity to expand on their thoughts, and to engage their assistance in organizing focus groups. We received generous assistance from leaders of all three cultural groups in assembling well-balanced and vocal participants in separate focus groups for the Latino, Somali and Cambodian communities. To encourage participation, and as a token of respect for the time and attention attendees devoted to the focus groups, ECHO offered

food, refreshments and a \$20 Target gift certificate to participants.

At the initial May 19 meeting (see Appendix 1 for attendees), leaders observed that though their opinions are often solicited, they are rarely informed later about the outcome, or given the opportunity to participate in the ongoing development of plans. ECHO scheduled a follow-up meeting for October 28 to report back on findings to date, to seek confirmation or correction on its conclusions, and to engage participants in ongoing development of emergency plans. ECHO and Rochester officials presented a PowerPoint slide show that summarized findings to date. Participants were issued electronic clickers that allowed them to offer feedback to help validate these

conclusions. Perhaps ironically, this meeting was less well attended than the initial meeting, but the voting technology proved engaging for those who were present.

These meetings were co-led by Rochester Emergency Management director Ken Jones and Rochester/Olmsted County

Principal Planner Sandra Goslee to signal that top officials were active participants in the process, had a genuine interest in the concerns raised by the group, and, as Jones and Goslee repeatedly stressed, that they hoped to build an ongoing relationship with participants that will continue into other local government planning and emergency management efforts.



In focus groups, participants repeatedly observed that communication with 911 dispatchers is an enormous problem for people with limited English skills. Finding solutions is a top emergency planning concern for immigrant populations.

Reports from the Field

Large Groups, Informants, Focus Groups

Initial Meeting Community Leaders

May 19, 2014
Rochester Public Library
Complete Notes: See Appendix 2

The Agenda: Leaders within the Somali, Latino and Cambodian cultural communities were invited to an evening meeting with emergency management and planning staff, plus officials from the police and fire departments, public library, public schools, public health, ECHO and IMAA (Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association). In a discussion moderated by

ECHO, community leaders were asked to identify:

- top emergency/disaster fears,
- why they are not involved in emergency planning now
- what can be done to reduce potential emergency hazards
- best ways to communicate emergency information to Rochester cultural communities
- how best to create ongoing an ongoing partnership

Results Summary:

- Top concerns and fears

- o Lack of understandable information for limited English speakers
- o False rumors
- o Panic
- o Inadequate preparation within families
- o Care for vulnerable people, such as children, the elderly, the disabled
- Most worrisome type of emergency
 - o Winter and summer storms
 - o Train derailment and resultant chemical spills
 - o Fire
 - o Floods
 - o Shootings
- Reasons for limited involvement in current planning
 - o Information about efforts not provided in translated, visual forms for limited English speakers who may not be literate in their first language
 - o Lack of trust of officialdom, feelings of unease in environments where planning is done
 - o More pressing issues of survival within communities
- How to reduce effects of potential hazards
 - o Hire bi-lingual staff from cultural communities to be part of emergency management and planning teams
 - o Create simple, concise, translated, visual messages on the most important things to do to keep families safe
- Best ways to communicate
 - o Use existing communication channels, such as Somali TV, which streams via the web, and Facebook
 - o Mimic the Rochester community ambassador program designed to help tourists downtown with creation of a program of bi-lingual emergency outreach workers who would be trained to deliver emergency messaging within cultural communities
 - o Create a separate city/county hub of information and resources for limited English speakers
- How to create an ongoing partnership
 - o Hire bi-lingual staff so language skills/cultural competence are built into the structure of government
 - o Investigate/replicate successful models around the country
 - o Create a roster of key leaders for consulting on planning and emergency management
 - o Include faith communities

Key Informant Interviews

June, 2014

Following the initial May 19 meeting, ECHO representatives interviewed key Latino, Somali and Cambodian leaders to give them an opportunity to elaborate on ideas quickly expressed in the library meeting, and to engage their help in organizing focus groups. Individuals interviewed included:

- **Mohamoud Hamud** (Mayo Clinic Islamic religious counselor, considered for position as prime

minister of Somalia, Mayor's Hero's Award in 1997 for his work in reducing tensions between Somali and American youth.)

- **Jaylani Abdullah** (Board member Family Service Rochester, employment counselor at Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association.)
- **Kim Sin** (System Administrator at University of Minnesota Rochester, director of Cambodian Association of Rochester Minnesota (CARM), awarded the NAACP George Gibbs Meritorious Community Service Award for Leadership Education.)
- **Ponloeu Chim** (Associate director, Professional Language Services, Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association.)
- **Miguel Valdez Soto** (Multicultural Research Coordinator in the Office for Community-Engaged Research, Mayo Clinic; manager of Smart Rides EcoTaxi, organizer of Pata de Perro Bike Club, a Rochester youth-mentoring group.)

Informants were eager to have an ongoing relationship with government officials. Their experience is that they are called upon in the middle of a project, asked to contribute their opinions to check off a bureaucratic box, and then ignored.

- **Miriam Goodson** (Juntos Coordinator, Alliance of Chicanos, Hispanics and Latin Americans, Education Advocate at Family Service Rochester)

Detailed notes on these interviews can be found in the Appendix 2.

Key observations:

- There is enthusiasm for focus groups to help deepen input from members of the respective communities. Interviewees were generally quick to offer help finding participants.
- There is markedly less enthusiasm for surveys. Informants cited the difficulty of conducting a survey in translation along with the English

Community Leaders

Mohamoud Hamud and Miriam Goodson were among the community leaders who offered their insight during key informant interviews.



version, of getting responses from people who may not be literate in their primary language, and of pulling a valid sample.

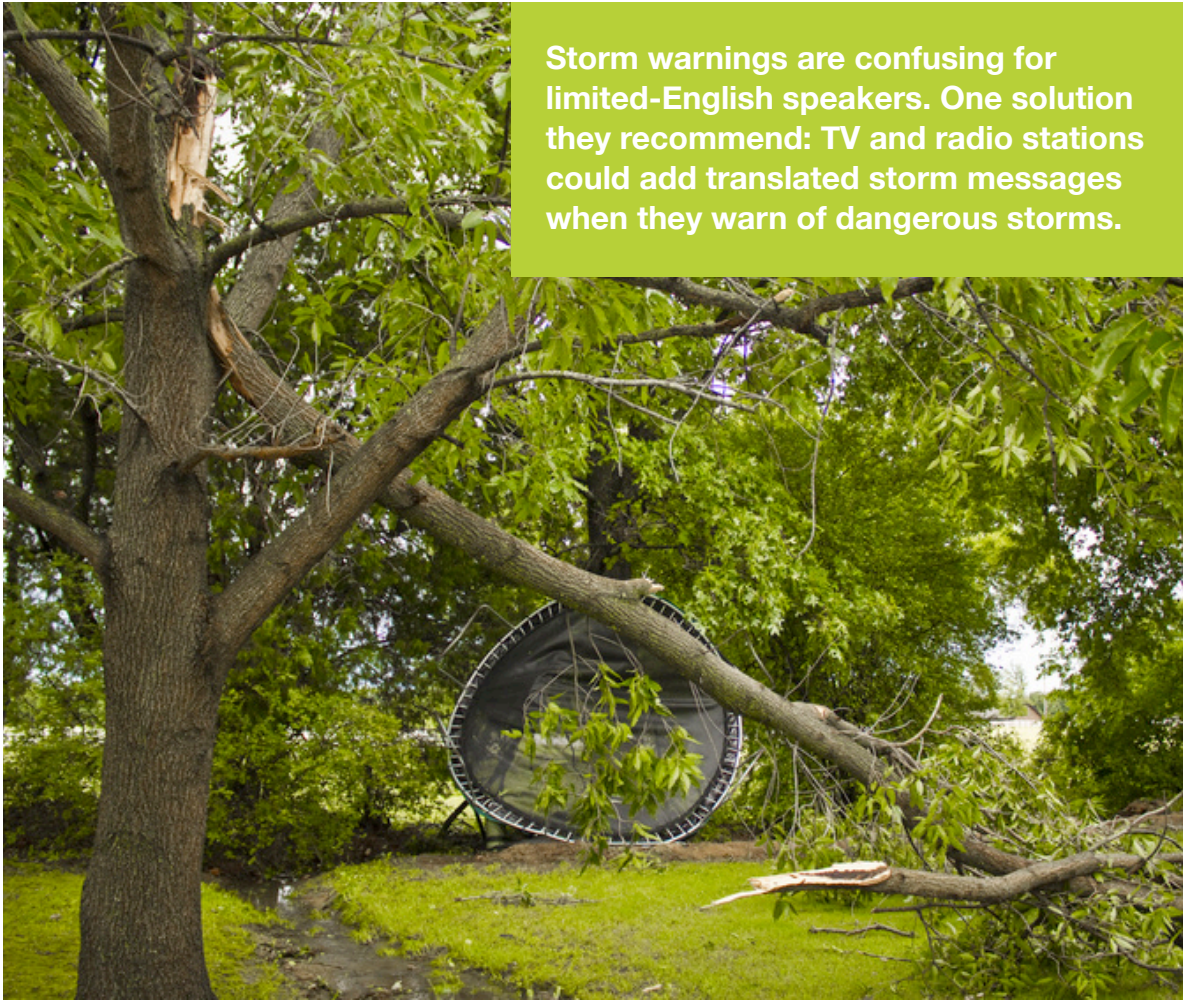
- Informants were eager to have an ongoing relationship with government officials. Their experience is that they are called upon in the middle of a project, asked to contribute their opinions to check off a bureaucratic box, and then — having served their purpose — ignored until the next project that requires their input. So how to do better? Their observations:
 - o Some officials are doing a job that has garnered respect. Rochester Councilman Michael Wojcik's Coffee with Leaders (a regularly scheduled coffee session) was mentioned as a good opportunity to communicate with a public official who is open to input from Rochester's cultural communities. Similarly, MN House members Tina Leibling and Kim Norton were cited as being open and in regular communication with Rochester's non-white population.
 - o Informants frequently observed that a relationship is different than a task. It might involve showing up at community events to participate and observe, not necessarily to conduct official business. It might mean meeting one person who introduces you to another and another. It's a process that evolves over

time, sometimes by encounters at events, other times through an invitation to a casual cup of coffee. It's a way eventually to do business, but in a way that doesn't always look much like business in the moment. Government officials would be welcome guests and could expect gracious introductions from any of our informants.

- o Informants were interested in a local version of ECHO's Cultural Services Unit program, in which volunteers from cultural communities are trained to serve as intermediaries between emergency managers and local populations. They recognized this as a two-way street, in which community members volunteer their time but also receive training and certification. In addition, volunteers become familiar faces to managers who may eventually be in a position to hire and who, as a result of the CSU program, may be more aware of the benefits that bilingual/bicultural staff can bring to a department.

Focus Groups

The Agenda: Separate focus groups were organized for the Somali, Latino and Cambodian communities. Participants were asked:



Storm warnings are confusing for limited-English speakers. One solution they recommend: TV and radio stations could add translated storm messages when they warn of dangerous storms.

- What type of natural and man-made emergencies most worry or concern you?
- What concerns are unique to your cultural community? For example, are there buildings or places that need particular protection? Are there cultural practices or traditions that should be taken into account?
- What are the best and most trusted ways to get helpful information concerning emergencies?
- The conversation expanded, however, to include crime and speeding cars on streets where kids are playing as a type of emergency.

Concerns particular to the Latino community?

- Illicit drug issues (sales and use) were cited as a form of emergency concern that particularly affects the Latino community.

Best ways to get information to Latinos?

- There is no locally generated communication in Spanish. TV, radio and newspapers are for the Twin Cities, and not directed at Rochester.
- Radio and TV messages in Spanish would help get emergency

More detailed reporting on individual focus groups is included in the Appendix 3-5.

Results Summary: Latino Group

What types of emergencies are of greatest concern?

- Winter and summer storms

- information to Spanish-speaking people.
- Alternatives, such as a Spanish-language smartphone app, or Facebook messaging, might be useful.
- Employers could be used to communicate emergency messages to Spanish-speaking employees.
- The school “Robo-call” system could be used to deliver translated messages to households where Spanish is the primary language.
- Churches and schools are trusted places and locations where more preparedness information could be shared.

Results Summary: Cambodian Group

What type of emergencies are of greatest concern?

- Fires, flood and storms are mentioned, plus poisons and crime.

Concerns particular to the Cambodian community?

- Difficulty communicating with 911 operators was an overwhelming concern. Dispatchers don't speak Cambodian, and many of the focus group participants had limited English. Calling 911 is frustrating and time consuming at exactly the moment when callers perceive time to be of the essence.
- English is difficult to learn. Older Cambodian residents often rely on their children to help in a crisis, or may call IMAA for assistance.
- In an emergency evacuation, it might be best for Cambodian community members not to be obliged to go to a place associated with religion.

Perception of hazard is different for people coming out of civil disorganization and war. “We come from disaster,” said one participant as he explained how Somalis perceive the relative perils of emergencies in Rochester.

Best ways to get information?

- Visual information translated to Cambodian would be the greatest help.
- Participants watch local TV, but it is of limited help because of the language barrier.
- Preparedness information in Cambodian, delivered at meetings, on DVD, TV or on tapes would be helpful to reduce anxiety about what to do in an emergency.
- Trusted places to get information are the church or temple, IMAA and from Olmsted County Community Services.

Results Summary: Somali Group

What type of emergencies are of greatest concern?

- Fire, winter storms and extreme cold were all mentioned as concerns.
- Language difficulties related to the 911 system are a recurring problem.

Concerns particular to the Somali community?

- Knowledge and preparedness were named as concerns. The equatorial environment of Somalia means that immigrants have no prior knowledge of the types of storms or extreme cold that might put them at risk here. Similarly, fire risk/prevention in Minnesota housing is different and unfamiliar. Education

would help increase preparedness and reduce risk.

- The perception of hazard is possibly different for people coming out of civil disorganization and war. "We come from disaster," said one participant as he explained how Somalis perceive the relative perils of emergencies in Rochester.
- In the first moments of a disaster, concerns of Somalis will be no different than those of other residents — safety for their families and for themselves. In later stages, however, cultural considerations such as separation by gender for sleeping, hygiene related to toilet facilities and places for prayer would become significant.

Best ways to get information?

- Written communication is less helpful than spoken and/or visually-presented information. Many Somali residents do not read or write Somali.
- Some messages could be presented on Somali TV that streams from a Rochester website. Preparedness DVDs, such as those produced by ECHO, would also be helpful if distributed more widely.
- More bi-lingual Somalis working within government would improve communication
- Information could be presented at the mosque, in ESL classes, at IMAA, at community events. Constant reminders are key.
- Many Somalis use Facebook. Other technology-based solutions such as text messages through Rochester Alert or the school "Robo-call" system would reach a portion of the population.

Summary Meeting Report Back

Olmsted County Public Health Building

October 28, 2014

Details in Appendix 6

Method: Attendees at the initial May 19 meeting voiced a desire for reporting on the results from key informant interviews and focus groups. To answer those concerns for reporting back, ECHO organized an evening meeting for October 28. Those attending the May 19 meeting received a written invitation, an email reminder and a phone reminder for the October meeting. The meeting drew one representative of the Cambodian community, five Somali representatives, two Latino representatives, three public officials and ECHO staff.

Attendees were presented a list of findings from key informant interviews and focus groups, and asked to validate these conclusions using an electronic polling system that allowed results to be posted instantly on a screen. Questions were answered by all members of cultural communities in attendance, plus a Rochester Olmsted Planning Department official and one ECHO staff member.

Following this exercise, attendees were asked to fill out a form to identify future hazard mitigation and emergency planning activities in which they would be willing to participate.

Response to poll questions:

Written and spoken English does not meet emergency needs of my community

- Agree 89%
- Disagree 11%
- Don't know

Written emergency warnings in native language are not helpful

- Agree 78%
- Disagree 22%
- Don't know

“People can’t all be put together in one box,” said participant Miriam Goodson. “There can be a lot of conflict within groups. It takes a lot of work to get into a comfort zone where people are willing to share information.”

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language on TV and radio

- Agree 90%
- Disagree 10%
- Don't know

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language via Twitter

- Agree 20%
- Disagree 60%
- Don't know 20%

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language via Rochester Alert

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful to create a network of ambassadors to educate and spread emergency information

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language via text messaging

- Agree 50%
- Disagree 40%
- Don't know 10%

It would be useful to create contact lists of agencies to share information via mosque, church, temple, IMAA

- Agree 80%
- Disagree
- Don't know 20%



It would be useful to hire more bi-lingual staff for 911 (and other critical roles)

- Agree 80%
- Disagree 10%
- Don't know 10%

Preparedness education should be conducted before emergencies using materials such as ECHOs translated DVDs

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful to hold monthly coffee sessions with city officials and cultural leaders

- Agree 80%
- Disagree
- Don't know 20%

Emergency planning should be included as part of the English class curriculum

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful for officials to attend community events to build relationships

- Agree 89%
- Disagree
- Don't know 11%

In a discussion following the polling, participants observed that officials should beware the impulse to believe that it is simple to get opinions within and among cultural groups regarding effective emergency messaging. "People can't all be put together in one box," said participant Miriam Goodson. "There can be a lot of

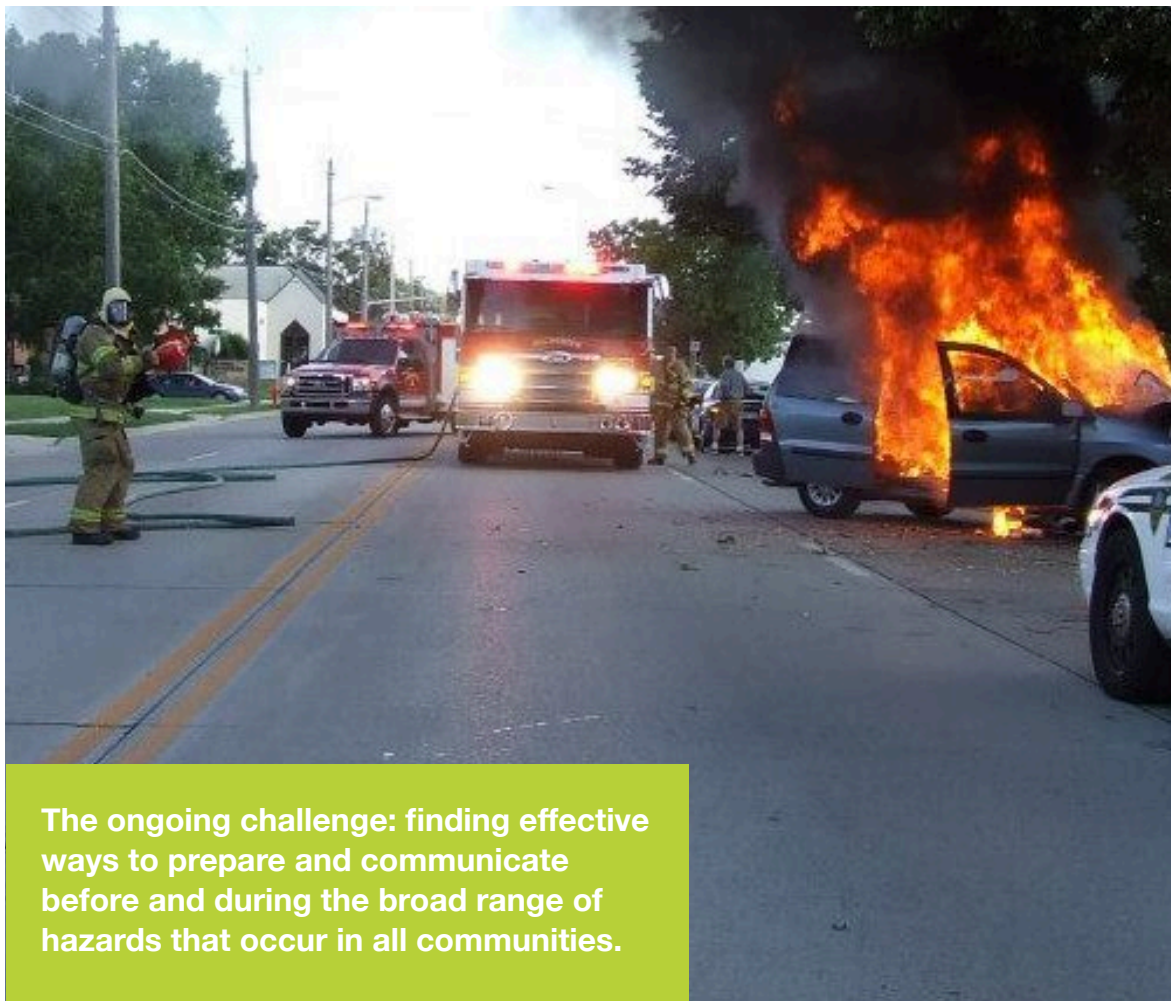
conflict within groups. It takes a lot of work to get into a comfort zone where people are willing to share information."

Participant Mohamoud Hamud noted that meeting simply to meet is not an effective use of time. "We should be meeting about a specific agenda," he said. "Not meeting just to have coffee."

Participation in Future Activities

To conclude the meeting ECHO distributed sign-up sheets on which attendees could mark future activities in which they would be willing to participate. These options, along with responses, included:

1. Review hazard/mitigation plan (1 participant)
2. Update cultural leader list of cultural advisers to provide support in crisis (1 participant)
3. Support development of a cultural services unit (2 participants)
4. Be included on a Leader List
5. Help to develop media videos on EM topics (1 participant)
6. Provide distribution list contacts (1 participant)
7. Serve as interpreter/liaison in crisis situations (1 participant)
8. Be part of a multi-cultural advisory unit (3 participants)
9. Attend city coffee meetings (2 participants)



The ongoing challenge: finding effective ways to prepare and communicate before and during the broad range of hazards that occur in all communities.

Recommendations Short and Long Term Strategies

Underlying Considerations

Our recommendations are based on several considerations that are not always apparent when dealing with traditionally underserved populations.

First, members of cultural communities are frequently studied, surveyed, invited to focus groups and interviewed. There is a wide-spread weariness with these processes, and a general suspicion that official interest serves the immediate need to complete a report, grant application or planning process, but is not part of an authentic effort to

address and resolve problems within the community.

Second, the leaders we identified are the same people who are commonly involved to participate in these processes. There is perhaps a tendency not to realize their stature, importance and the demands upon their time within their communities. To name one example from our key informant cohort, Mohamoud Hamud, now a Mayo employee, was also on a short list for consideration to serve as prime minister of Somalia. He, like others who offered their advice during this process, serves on various community boards, is an obvious source of

advice and assistance for numerous members of the Somali community, and is occupied with his own job and family. Our panel of key informants have at least as many demands upon their time as any public official who hopes to interact with them.

Finally, despite the caveats above, our informants as a group are deeply invested in advancing the interests of their community and in participating in efforts that will make them better prepared to face emergencies and disasters. The key is to devise strategies that make community leaders equal, honored partners, to create planning processes that are respectful of the many demands upon their time, and to follow through with efforts that demonstrate serious commitment to resolving issues — and not simply commitment to completing a report.

Recommendation One

Although this is not directly related to the hazard mitigation planning process, there is nonetheless a deep frustration with the 911 system among limited English speakers. Virtually everyone knows they should call 911 in an emergency. But our focus group participants commonly observed that after they dial, they are stuck. Dispatchers speak English. Their questions are indecipherable. Callers don't know what to do next. Planning for hypothetical disasters pales in comparison to this everyday dilemma. This is not an easily-solved problem. Among the suggestions made by focus group participants included providing cue cards to identify for limited-English speakers key words such as “Medical,” “Fire,” or “Crime,” that could be spoken to dispatchers. But a quickly-noted problem is that many non-English speakers are not literate in their first language. Nonetheless, the work to improve 911 response should begin immediately. This is a necessary step

to assure that the genuine concerns of the communities were heard, and to prove that this exercise was not operating simply off a closely-defined FEMA agenda.

Recommendation Two

Separate follow-up steps into long-term and short-term strategies and begin working on both. Short-term programs will help to demonstrate commitment toward building ongoing relationships. Ongoing relationships will make it possible to develop long-term solutions that assure greater disaster and emergency preparedness within cultural communities.

▪ **Short-term Strategies**

- o **Informal Meetings:** If the outcomes of this process include the development of ongoing relationships, then recognize that such relationships are rarely forged in formal meetings. Set aside time to meet with the leaders identified here to learn more about their lives, about the complexity of their interactions within their communities, and their aspirations for themselves and the members of their communities. Informants also often mentioned that they would be eager to welcome officials to community gatherings if they attended in a personal rather than official capacity. Another option suggested by participants is a monthly coffee meeting at which input and suggestions could be casually exchanged.
- o **Plan Review:** Upon completion of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, invite

- leaders identified in the process to review and critique sections that address the needs of specific cultural communities.
 - o **Develop a Leader List:** Identify and secure contact information for cultural advisors who can provide guidance in a disaster/emergency crisis.
 - o **Develop an Interpreter/Liaison List:** Assemble a list of interpreters willing to be on call during crisis response.
- **Long-term Strategies**
 - o **Create a Cultural Services Unit:** Support the development of a 20-member team of bi-lingual workers dedicated to providing outreach and insight to the City of Rochester during crisis response, and to provide preparedness education within cultural communities before disaster strikes.
 - o **Develop Translated Videos on Emergency Topics:** With assistance from members of cultural communities, develop and distribute videos that offer emergency preparedness information to limited English speakers in their own language.
 - o **Get Translated Emergency Info on the Air:** Work with local TV and radio stations to provide translated emergency information during an emergency.
 - o **Develop a Robust List of Channels and Target Audiences:** Create a small group to determine a range of channels for emergency information. (This might include, but not be limited to, web sites, broadcast, social media, print, TV, radio, physical locations such as churches, mosque, temple, IMAA, markets and other places frequented by immigrants.)
 - o **Create a Multi-Cultural Advisory Unit:** Build a group that meets monthly to provide input for health, safety and emergency government services with particular attention to diversity and inclusion.
 - o **Hire Bi-lingual Staff:** Examine whether members of cultural communities are represented in city/county government departments such as 911 dispatch, police, fire, etc. Explore ways of using the expertise of existing bi-lingual staff.

Conclusion

Steps Toward Building Relationships

A crucial sentiment expressed by participants in the final meeting of this process was a desire for concrete action. “Tell us what you need and we will do it,” said Somali community leader Mohamed Hamud.

However, it’s fair to think that life is complex and rarely described in its richness during the course of a public meeting. Participants clearly want to see action that addresses their concerns with the 911 system, with translated storm information on TV and radio, and with translated, visual emergency preparation education. They say they are weary of interviews, studies and surveys that lead to no conclusion other than more interviews, studies and surveys. At the same time, leaders in all of Rochester’s communities — business, non-profits, neighborhoods, etc. — all seek relationships with top government officials that are deeper than formal, public meeting interactions. We believe the situation is the same with leaders in Rochester’s cultural communities.

The immediate challenge is to complete the All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. We suggest that upon completion of a draft document, the cultural community leadership group be reconvened to review, edit and approve a final version.

As a subsequent step, we suggest that the list of recommendations above be reviewed

by a cultural community leadership group and relevant city officials, that a priority list be derived, and that an action plan with scheduled deliverables be established.

We suggest finally that a less concrete but equally important step be undertaken to develop personal relationships with members of the cultural communities who have volunteered their time to attend these meetings. Given the social structure of American life, it is more likely that public officials encounter Caucasian leaders of the local business or non-profit communities in social settings. Consequently they develop relationships based on something other than pure business transactions. This is less likely to occur with members of cultural communities. This isn’t an insurmountable barrier, but it does require a more intentional approach. The key informants who participated in this process are engaged, interested and interesting individuals. The business of government would be advanced by knowing more about them personally, and learning more about their views of the challenges and opportunities within their communities. The depth of this information and ideas will never be expressed in a public meeting. It can begin to be explored over lunch, or a late afternoon coffee date. Our final suggestion is amorphous but in our view significant. Pick up the phone. Make a date. See where the conversation goes. Prepare to be amazed.

Appendix 1

May 19 Meeting Notes

Community Leaders Meeting Rochester Public Library May 19, 2014

Sign in sheet attached.

Welcome, introductory remarks

Description of emergency management process, role and functions of ECHO — Ken Jones, Sandi Goslee, Lillian McDonald

Introductions, participants respond to question about their greatest fear in an emergency

- Fire. Greg Martin, Fire Chief
- Fear is that in emergency community doesn't know what is happening, what the warnings are.. In emergency we are the weakest link, because of language issues and cultural issues, so it is not easy to reach all of us. Mohamed Hamad, IMAA
- Lack of being prepared because people don't understand, say for instance that their medication is in a safe spot in tornado. Chris Surprenant, Public Health Nurse
- Fear that traditional communication systems won't work in emergency and will have to rely on person to person communication. Amy Evans, Olmsted County Public Health
- Fear that information and resources won't go to people who need them. Miguel Valdez Soto, Mayo Clinic, CARE, ACHLA
- Fear lack of information, but also incorrect information — the rumor mill. Ron Buzard, director, IMAA
- Greatest fear is for the lives of our children when something happens in our community. Rebeca Sedarski, Chicano Latino Affairs Council
- Fear that the electricity will be out and I don't be able to do anything. Susan Hansen, public library
- Biggest fear is of shooting, because I have three kids. Leticia Flores, St. Francis of Assisi Church
- Biggest fear is for immigrants, that they don't know how to respond to sirens, that they won't know what to do. Ponloeu Chim, IMAA
- Fear that we have not put together an emergency plan for my family. I want to have a place where we can meet and find each other. Graciela Porraz, Mayo Clinic interpreter
- Not a fear but a fact, how are we going to handle panicking people. What will we do when everybody loses their control. Miriam Goodson, CARE, ACHLA, St. Francis of Assisi church
- Fear that people will not get the right resources, that somebody who needs medical attention won't get what they need quickly, that we can't save a life in time. Kim Sin, Cambodian Association of Rochester MN
- Fear is that I will panic and I won't know what to do. Sam Ouk, Buddhist temple, Rochester Schools
- Fear for people who are not connected to the community, to the

cultural group, for instance the elderly and alone, or people just passing through, who have nobody looking out for them. Julie Nigon, Hawthorne Learning Center

- My fear is for the time after things happen, in the crucial moment when things have gone wrong, will we have anticipated in advance so we are ready to go. Abdullahi Hassan, IMAA
- My fear is for those with disabilities, those who can't move around to get help. Abdirahman Muse, Masjed Abubakr Al-Seddiq
- My fear is that my community will not know what to do in an emergency. Guled Muhamed, Masjed Abubakr Al-Seddiq
- I wonder what happens depending on the time of day, what will the reaction be if a disaster is in the middle of the night. Abdella Mohamed, Masjed Abubakr Al-Seddiq
- Fear everything other people mentioned, but especially for the elderly who have no support because of the language. Jaylani Abdalla, IMAA
- Biggest fear is that the people most directly impacted don't have a safe place to shelter. No basement, no place to get out of a fire. Sandi Goslee, Rochester Olmsted Planning
- Fear is that there will not be plan to communicate in a time of crisis. Mohamed Sheik Nur, IMAA
- Fear is that we won't provide good communication. We want to be able to get emergency messages out so people know what to do. Ken Jones, Emergency Management

- Fear is not being able to help my kids. Efren Maldonado, ECHO

What type of emergency worries you the most?

Members of the group answered:

- Tornados
- Mass shooting
- Severe weather with low temps
- Ice storm that takes power out
- Any type of fire
- Black ice
- A meteor like the one in Russia
- A big blizzard
- A derailment with chemical spills, because we know what to do but don't have resources to solve the problem
- Lightning
- Sinkholes
- Flood,

Why aren't you involved in planning now?

- There is a lack of communication to our communities, not having information in the right language. Leticia Flores
- There should be more use of visual means to communicate, more use of radio in the language.
- There is a lack of knowledge, for example people don't know how to read the weather radar because they don't know what the colors mean. Kim Sin.
- We have to build up trust, because we are not usually involved in decision making. For example, we are only involved with law

- enforcement when there is a problem. Mohamoud Hamud
- It has to do with the environment in which planning takes place. Here there is support (in this room) and we can communicate in a safe environment. A community member who has less language will be even less likely to come to a public meeting. There is a feeling of safety here because we know that other people in the community will also be here. Language is part of it but camaraderie is also part of it. Sam Ouk
- A lot of families have more pressing issues with their family and sometimes the only real issue is survival. We have to go to them if we want them to be involved. Miriam Goodson.
- You can never reach the whole community, but we can come and relay those messages to more people in the community. Mohamoud Hamud
- The way to reach more people in our community it through the churches, through the faith based communities. Miriam Goodson
- part of the emergency management system. Jaylani Abadalla
- It would help if we had simple messages that are easily understood, created and reviewed so people know what you're talking about and can apply it in daily life. Can't be real technical and cover every possibility. Have to study how to simplify messages and and decide what are the few, best things to keep your family safe. It has to work with all groups in town, and we have to make it simple and easy to remember. As soon as you try to deal with every type of crisis, it's not simple anymore. Elderly, poor, non-native speakers — you can't give them a five page document,. Julie Nigon
- Discussion of what the least number of messages on how to deal with crisis might be. Agreement that the basic scenarios are, shelter in place, run, hide, or fight.
- Discussion of effectiveness of messages delivered from school by children to parents. Lillian mentions that she, for example, never delivered messages about bad grades. Amy Evans asks whether messages delivered by children filter through the community. Sam Ouk observes that he doesn't know what kids take back. They might be educated to deliver information more reliably. But messages are more powerful if adults have a conversation with parents.

What can we do to reduce the effects of potential hazards?

- Ken Jones asks whether people have signed up for Rochester Alert. A few raise their hands, but most people have not signed up.
- What would help is if the Somali and other minority communities were part of the city, hired within city departments and part of the city workforce. You have to hire people from the communities to be

What is the best way to communicate?

- Several members of the group suggested social media, Facebook, Somali TV
- Ken Jones mentioned the Do One Thing program, which also has translations of simple emergency tips in translation.
- Jaylani Abdalla says that Somali TV is watched in the community, and that if the city and county are willing to work with the channel, programming would reach Somali speakers.
- Kim Sin says that he is working on streaming Cambodian programming via Roku and has one program loaded already.
- Lillian observes that part of the problem is that there is no centralization of information. There are too many channels, and everybody is watching a different one.
- Miguel Valdez Soto promotes the idea of emergency information outreach workers, similar to the community ambassador program in place downtown. We could use the same structure that the Rochester visitors bureau has already created to produce ambassadors for cultural communities. They could be trained to become voices, give people awards for participating, create useful networks for getting information out to people.
- Kim Sin says there should be a separate hub for information from the city. He has tried to get city departments to have booths in the past at community events. When you call you're told you have to talk to this guy and that guy. There should be something closer to one-stop shopping.

How can we create an ongoing partnership?

- Suggestions offered:
 - Hire people from the community so they're built into the structure of government
 - Build an ambassador network
 - Look around for systems to copy.
 - Better to develop something that can be used quickly than to create a long process that may or may not result in an implemented program.
 - Create a key leader roll-a-dex.
 - Any information going to the community should be short enough to fit on the front and back of a card. Julie Nigon says that Hawthorne Learning Center could help develop and deliver monthly messages.
 -

What would be good hubs for disseminating information?

- Suggestions include:
 - Hawthorne Learning Center
 - Public library
 - IMMA
 - Faith based communities, churches, mosque, temple
 - YWCA
 - Somali charter school

- Rochester schools because of the large number of language staff.
- Community college
- Migrant Health Service
- City/county health department, WIC office
- Mayo Clinic
- Chamber of commerce
- Workforce development center
- Channel one
- Headstart
- Good Samaritan Clinic
- Zumbro Valley Mental Health
- Rochester Senior Support Service
- Red Cross
- Employers such as Rochester Meats, Senaca Foods, Reichel Foods, Lake Foods, hotels and restaurants, construction companies, ag companies.

How to create ongoing effort: what is best way?

- Ken Jones states that we want to find meaningful things to do regarding emergency messaging,

but we also want this to be an ongoing effort. The trouble is we don't really know how to do it.

- Miriam Goodson responds that what Ken just said is what we have been missing. There are many silent voices — people who are not represented because the grass roots have not been engaged and heard from.
- Mohamoud Hamud says that we don't need ECHO to continue this process, but we have to create a way to keep this effort going within our community.
- Churches and the faith communities are missing.
- Are surveys effective at getting grass root opinion? If questions are short they can work, says Kim Sin. Miriam says that it is very complicated to get a survey back from community.
- General agreement that participants want reports back from this meeting.
- Participants observe that the Sudanese and Vietnamese communities are missing from this meeting.

Appendix 2

Key Informant Interviews

Interviewees:

Hamud Mohamoud
 Jaylani Abdullah
 Kim Sin
 Ponloeu Chim
 Miguel Valdez Soto
 Miriam Goodson

Kim Sin and Ponloeu Chim were interviewed together. Other informants were interviewed individually by Efrén Maldonado and Tony Schmitz.

Key observations:

- There is enthusiasm for focus groups to help deepen input from members of the respective communities. Interviewees were generally quick to offer help finding participants.
- There is markedly less enthusiasm for surveys. Informants cited the difficulty of conducting a survey in translation along with the English version, of getting responses from people who may not be literate in their primary language, and of pulling a valid sample.
- Informants were eager to have an ongoing relationship with government officials. Their experience is that they are called upon in the middle of a project, asked to contribute their opinions to check off a bureaucratic box, and then — having served their purpose — ignored until the next project that requires their input. So how to do better? A few of their opinions:
 - Some officials are doing a job that has garnered

respect. Rochester Councilman Michael Wojcik's Coffee with Leaders (a regularly scheduled coffee session) was mentioned as a good opportunity to communicate with a public official who is open to input from Rochester's cultural communities. Similarly, MN House members Tina Leibling and Kim Norton were cited as being open and in regular communication with Rochester's non-white population.

- Informants frequently observed that a relationship is different than a task. It might involve showing up at community events to participate and observe, not necessarily to conduct official business. It might mean meeting one person who introduces you to another and another. It's a process that evolves over time, sometimes by encounters at events, other times through an invitation to a casual cup of coffee. It's a way eventually to do business, but in a way that doesn't always look much like business in the moment. Our sense is that you would be welcome guests and could expect gracious

- introductions from any of our informants.
- Informants were interested in a local version of ECHO's Cultural Services Unit program, in which volunteers from cultural communities are trained to serve as intermediaries between emergency managers and local populations. They recognized this as a two-way street, in which community members volunteer their time but also receive training and certification. In addition, volunteers become familiar faces to managers who may eventually be in a position to hire and who, as a result of the CSU program, may be more aware of the benefits that bilingual/bicultural staff can bring to a department.

Mohamoud Hamud

Mayo Clinic counselor

To build on the contacts invited to the library meeting, he suggests contacting:

- Somali Community Resettlement Services (Abdullah Hared (Sharif), Executive Director, <http://somalcrs.wix.com/scrs#!>). SCRS also operates the widely viewed Somali TV (<http://rstvonline.net/about.htm>).
- Rochester Math and Science Academy (Abdulkadir Abdalla, Executive Director, <http://www.rmsacademy.org/>)

- Rochester STEM Academy (Mohamoud is a board member, Bryan Rossi, Director, <http://rochesterstemacademy.org/Home-Page.php>)

He observes that the Somali community is rarely at the table from the beginning of any official process. Instead it is called on to comment when necessary. Then officials disappear. "The community has to have ownership and be at the table from the beginning." Also, he says, "There should be something to grease the wheels.

Some paths to participation: sponsor events that are already occurring within the Somali community, go to coffee with community members, "then repeat, like the commercials on TV." Celebrations at the two Rochester mosques at the end of Ramadan (Monday, July 28) would also be an opportunity to meet people at a happy time. A participant at the May meeting, Guled Ahmed Muhamed, is a co-founder of Masjed Abudbakr Al-Seddiq. More information about the Islamic Center of Rochester is here: <http://www.theicr.org/> The board director is Sareer A. Fazili.

Regarding communication: "Written material is a waste of money. (Many people are not literate in Somali or English.) Visual material is much more powerful and useful."

Jaylani Abdalla

IMAA

He says that focus groups are a necessary way to gain additional perspectives in the Somali community, and that he is willing to help organize them. He appreciates that Somali women should be included. "The

problem, however, is not outreach in Rochester, but how to build a relationship. I have lived here 20 years now. It is different than it was 20 years ago. There is now some kind of connection, but it is not solid. The minority community is not satisfied with this connection."

Evidence, he says, is the make-up of the workforce. Three percent of the county workforce is minority, he believes. He believes it's less than one percent of the city workforce. "Maybe in the library, yes, but in public works, no."

Somali TV is important, but even so he's not sure that it reaches 50 percent of the community. It is important, he notes, just to show up at events if your interest is in building relationships. "At the mosques you can show up, and you meet one person and one person and one person, and then over time you have something." Among upcoming events in the end of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, on the evening of Monday, July 28. Another useful connection might be through the bilingual staff in the school system. Contact Julie Nigon at Hawthorne Learning Center for details.

The ECHO CSU program might be effective, he allows, but the best way to implement such a program would be through existing Somali programs. The most interested element of the Somali population might be teens, in which case partnerships could be accomplished with the Somali-based charter schools.

Miriam Goodson

Educational Advocate

Olmsted County Community Services

ACHLA/CARE/St. Francis of Assisi Church

Says there is a paucity of information in Spanish. No TV station, no Spanish language newspaper, radio comes from Austin or Faribault. Robo-calls from schools in Spanish can be confusing for parents with multiple children in multiple schools, who get several calls on some mornings. Miguel Valdez Soto (another participant in the May 19 meeting) used to run a TV show on health issues but gave it up.

Says a common mistake of officials and others attempting outreach to the Rochester Latino community is to assume that it is a homogenous block, rather than Spanish-speaking individuals who may identify most closely with others from their country, with members of their church, etc. Another inclination of outsiders, she says, is to view the Latino community in terms of deficits rather than assets. She repeated a thought she also delivered in the May meeting: In the case of a real emergency, it's the people with very little who will find it easiest to get by and survive.

She says that frequently when comment is required, the usual suspects are rounded up. "You shouldn't stop with me and Miguel." She says she will help set up focus groups to get deeper opinions from a wider range of community members.

To build relationships: "If you really want to be involved, you have to see how people live." Showing up at events, such as the St. Francis Church Car/Mass (an annual carnival), is one opportunity. "Come in regular clothes. Don't show up with an agenda. Ask people to share their expertise. Don't assume that people need things."

She mentioned that Rochester Schools superintendent Michael Muñoz has done a good job of outreach to culturally diverse communities, and would be sensible contact. Also, at St. Francis, Rev. Jose Morales, 507-288-7313, FrJose@StFrancis-church.org

Miguel Valdez Soto

Mayo Clinic
Center for Clinical and Translational
Science
ACHLA/CARE

Observes that relationships take time. "Probably people aren't going to listen to you the first three times. First they want to take care of their needs." To build a relationship you need to have a presence. You can start by attending events, meeting people there, learning who the people and programs are in the community, learning something about the strengths people bring and how they can contribute to the overall well-being of the area. Some events worth considering:

- Latino Fest, August 25
- Day of the Dead, traditionally Nov. 1

Examples of officials who are doing this well:

- Rochester area MN House members Tina Leibling and Kim Horton
- City Council member Michael Wojcik with the Coffee with Leaders sessions

He also mentions Centro Campesino worker Jeff Jurewicz as a worthwhile contact. (Centro Campesino, 2024 S Broadway, (507) 258-4646)

He repeats Miriam regarding communication vehicles, though he points out that ACHLA has a Facebook page that contains some information. Using Facebook's survey function, it would be possible to get responses to single questions from users. More information about ACHLA at <http://www.achla.info/#>, and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Alliance-of-Chicanos-Hispano-Latino-Americans-ACHLA/129307753827230>

It's worth noting that Miguel runs a Rochester pedicab service, and is also a principal in the Collective Pata de Perro Bike Club, which helps kids get bikes and keep them in repair. <https://www.facebook.com/CollectivePataDePerro>.

Ponloeu Chim

Interpreter Manager, IMAA

Kim Sin

IT Manager, U of MN

Ponloeu mentions that the Cambodia community is somewhat fractured in a dispute that started over religious matters and is now primarily about personalities. She tries to present herself in her work as strictly impartial.

Other worthwhile connections in the Cambodian community include Bunly Suy, Sheena Lot and Sarasarith Chuom, pastor at the Church of the Nazarene. Though he is leaving, Sam Ouk, Ponloeu says, remains a knowledgeable source of insight. Ponloeu is connected to the Church of the Nazarene and its pastor. Sam Ouk is active in the temple and could provide a connection. (The monks have limited

English.) There has also been a Cambodian Cultural School run through the public school system, led by Sam Ouk, that has been a good point of connection. (Though they questioned its future with Sam Ouk's departure.)

Obvious times to participate in Cambodian community events are at Cambodian New Year, celebrated April 13-15. There is also a gathering for the temple anniversary, celebrated July 19/20. Guests are invited on the 20th; contact Sam Ouk for details) and at the downtown open market on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays during the summer.

There's a wide mix of people there, says Ponloeu, who notes that IMAA participates four times during the summer. Another event is Phcum Bun,

Kim says that the elderly are lacking in basic information about hazards and safety. "They don't know what to do in a fire. They don't know how to escape. The sirens, why

they go off, what's the difference between a storm watch and warning, they don't understand these things." He says that working through the temple and church would be an effective way to reach large numbers of the elderly.

Kim is setting up a streaming video/text/music service directed at Rochester Cambodians, which would help fill the information gap within the community. More info on the platform, Roku, here: <http://www.roku.com/> Important to note that the device necessary to use the service costs \$49.95.

Ponloeu offered to help set up a focus group, and also said that she imagined a CSU-like group of local Khmer speakers could be useful in spreading emergency information. She noted that the police are already training a bias/hate crime group organized along similar principles.

Appendix 3

Cambodian Focus Group

July 16, 2014

Conducted at IMAA office, Rochester

Participants

Horr Yuk

Men Heng

Si Tha

Mony Ten

Sarasarith

Kong Hom

Eang Puy

Sokhan Sam

Yom San

Synat Om

Interpreter: Bunly Suy

Observers:

Ken Jones, Rochester Emergency
Management

Sandi Goslee, Rochester/Olmsted County
Planning

Summary: The overwhelming concern of participants was communication with 911 personnel. From the conversation it did not seem that transition from a dispatcher to a language line interpreter was smooth or even necessarily expected. In comparison, preparation for natural or man-made disasters seemed secondary.

Church and temple are trusted places to receive information, though finding appropriate times and means to deliver messages will require sensitivity and further information. Language barriers render mass communication vehicles such as TV, radio and newspaper of limited use. Cell phone access and use is common, but

participants depend on children or others for communication outside their community.

What type of emergency most worries or concerns you?

- Crime
 - "My big concern is that we do not speak English and we are in a panic if something happens. Especially things with a gun. We don't know what to do. We know that we need to call 911, but when we call we are afraid that by the time the police come everything has happened already, and that it is too late.
- Floods and Storms
 - "When I watch TV I see many things that make me worried and concerned. For example, storms and floods. And I don't know how to call for help. That is my concern.
- Fire
 - "This happened in my apartment building. My neighbor had a fire in the kitchen. I didn't know what to do to get help. Later the police came but we didn't know how to communicate with him."
 - "When I see a fire, I do not know what to do. I hear

sirens, see the smoke, and that creates even more panic for me."

- Poisons
 - If you have a sprays and chemicals left around the house, say the sprays for mosquitoes, or to kill bugs, are these poisons? How do I know?"

Problems learning and speaking English compound problems calling for emergency assistance.

- "It is very hard to learn English. It's very difficult to speak."
- "I depend on my children when I am sick. If they are not around, I have a little English to call a taxi, or the hospital, or an ambulance. I depend on my children or I call IMAA to help me. My children gave me a code for the phone, so I can dial one number and my daughter or children call and connect me with another place for help."
- "I speak some English. Sometimes there are pictures that help me understand. For instance, the heater has a poison sign on it."
- "People know how to call 911, but after they do that they are stuck."
- "I know how to call but I don't know how to speak. When you call they ask you many questions."

In an emergency, are there Cambodian cultural practices that may important to know? (*Example: in an evacuation, is it acceptable to you to take shelter in the temple if you are Christian?*)

- "That is not a problem."

- "There might be a conflict. It would be better to go to another place that is not associated with religion."
- "If they ask me where I want to go I will say, but otherwise I will go where I am told to go."
- "But if there is an emergency, how will I know where to go?"

What is the best way to communicate with you?

- "For me it is the TV, because there is a picture there."
- "If there was something in my own language, that would be helpful. In English, it is not so much help."
- "If on TV they had subtitles in Cambodian, that would be helpful." (*Asked for a show of hands, two participants indicated that they did not read Cambodian.*)
- "TV, tapes, DVD, flyers in Cambodian and English."
- "It would be very helpful if someone from ECHO, or the city or the county would call a meeting and educate us on how to prevent fires, or what to do in a tornado. But it is not necessarily a good idea to appear at community events for this purpose. For example, when people come to the temple for Cambodian New Year, they hare there to have a good time, not be be educated. There are too many people, too much noise."
- Six say they have both a land line and a cell phone. Three have a cell phone only. One has only a land line. Two say they speak no English.

Is there a TV station, radio station or newspaper that you use the most?

- KTCC local news is popular.
- TV 6, KALL
- "But the problem is that many of us do not speak English, and the TV is in English."

Who do you trust the most in an emergency?

- "I have my church."
- "I believe in God. In an emergency I pray to god."
- "In the Buddhist temple."
- "IMAA."
- "The county, Olmsted county social service."

Further discussion of 911 system, potential work-arounds

- "Even if they don't know my language, at least they know where I am calling from." Ken Jones clarifies: only if you are calling from a land line.
- Ken Jones asks: "One solution I hear is if I have a problem I call children and they call for me. And so is that one solution that can be expanded on for many other circumstances?"

- "Some people don't have children."
- Ken Jones: "Can we figure out trusted person to call, and that person would make call to 911 for you?"
- Bunly asks: "Who would that designated party be? An agency or a person?"
- "I cannot depend on children all the time. They work, so I can't always depend on them."
- Bunly: "Here in Rochester most people will call someone they know, like me or Sarasarith. But we are not always available."
- Ken Jones: "Would it help to have script so you could say 'medical,' 'fire,' 'police'?"
 - "The trouble is, we don't read English, but we don't all read our own language either."
 - "I am old, and if I am in a panic I might not remember the words."
 - Ken Jones: "Maybe pictures and words?"
 - Bunly: "People can see the picture, but they still can't say the word."

Appendix 4

Latino Focus Group

July 24, 2014

Olmsted County Public Health

Participants

Leo Flores
 Nina Campbell
 Enrique Zavala Sr.
 Enrique Zavala Jr.
 Mayte Zavala
 Alejandro Cruz
 Juanita
 Miguel Valdez Soto
 Maria Cunicruz

Interpreter

Graciela Porraz

Observers

Ken Jones, Rochester Emergency Management
 Sandi Goslee, Rochester/Olmsted County Planning

What type of emergency most worries you?

- Storms, tornadoes.
- An act of terror in school, a crazy person shooting.
- Snow storms.
- Lack of heat in winter, interruption of electrical service.
- Thunderstorms that damage electric lines. Story about downed line that started a nearby home on fire. Question about lightning rods, use and effectiveness (Mayte).
- High winds that damage trees and electrical service. Story about storm that damaged line, Nina explains that as a result she learned it was

her responsibility to maintain service from the sidewalk to the house

- Discussion of crime as a type of emergency. Enrique Sr. saw a bag of marijuana on the ground as he was working at Rochester Fest. He threw it in the river to get rid of it. Mayte notes that she saw more people at the event that she assumed were there to as part of a drug trade. She also mentions a greater number of panhandlers who look to her healthy and strong, and who would be capable of work. She posits this as something new in Rochester.
- Speeding cars are a hazard. Alejandro mentions that he lives on a street where children ride bikes or play in the street. But because of the nature of the street, drivers tend to speed there. He believes there should be a stop sign or speed bump. *(This subject is expanded upon later in the session. Ken explains that there are two solutions. 1: The short term strategy is to go to police and let them know you are concerned. 2: The long term solution is to talk to your local council person about the need for changes in the road, and traffic calming approaches.)*

Are there particular concerns emergency concerns for the Hispanic community?

- Drugs. Alejandro feels that people in the community are offering drugs to kids. Nina mentions that it is not only Hispanic kids at risk, but that it

is part of a situation within the schools. Kids are exposed to drugs there.

- Flooding. There are low areas that fill with potentially dangerous levels of water during storms.
- All emergency messaging on radio and TV is in English. Enrique says that shortly after he moved to the Rochester area, before he spoke much English, he heard at work that there was a bomb in the Plainview school that his kids attended. "It was so frustrating! I didn't know what to do. There wasn't communication I could understand. It was a false alarm. But what if it was for real, and parents didn't know what to do?"

Are there places where you believe you would get helpful information or useful assistance?

- Church. "That's where people feel safe and comfortable. That is a place they can trust." (Enrique Sr.) "There is a sense of comfort, of family, that we can help each other there." (Leo)

Are there cultural considerations emergency planners should be aware of?

- There might be people, for example, who are not willing to receive blood from another person. But that would depend on the religion and the individual, and would not be true of all Latinos. (Juanita)

What is the best way to distribute emergency information?

- Radio. There is a radio station here, but nothing is in Spanish. The radio we hear is from Minneapolis. If there were a special hour of Spanish, we would listen to that. If

we listen to a Rochester station it is because of the children. (Alejandro)

- It would be nice if the emergency messages could also be in Spanish. If it's a storm, usually the message is the same: go to the basement, stay away from windows. Maybe there could be a recording in Spanish that is used repeatedly. (Enrique Sr.)
- On television, with the messages along the bottom of the screen, maybe those emergency messages could also be in Spanish and other languages. (*Spanish language TV information is currently from cable stations based in Florida, so of no use.*) (Leo)
- I was trying to gather signatures a few years ago for a radio station in Spanish but we don't know what happened after that. Maybe the radio stations could have a special schedule to deliver the news in Spanish. (Juanita)
- A lot of Latinos work work work, and don't speak much English. They don't have time to go to classes. Those people are more vulnerable. (Alejandro) But people could at least learn a few words related to an emergency. Wherever we go, we have to learn how to speak the language. Even if you learn just a word a day. (Nina)
- Maybe we could download an emergency information phone app, and that could be in Spanish. (Maria)
- There could be Spanish emergency messaging on Facebook. (Leo) (*This draws a laugh from participants, but asked for a show of hands, everyone has a smartphone, and all but one participate in Facebook.*)

- Ken Jones says he understands that the city needs to get emergency information into Spanish, but asks whether participants know the difference between a storm watch and a storm warning. "The ones that don't speak English don't know what that means, and anyway, they are at work. If you just hear the sirens, you don't know whether it's a warning or a watch." (Leo)
- Ken observes that there are two problems: the initial storm warning and then the subsequent updated information. "I'm starting to think of ways to provide that information in Spanish. It's just a matter of being able to get it to you if it's already prepared. The other problem is to be able to get you the bits of updated information. It's a different problem and harder to solve. Enrique Sr. responds: Hispanics hear the tornado alarm and run to the basement if they can. But then we don't get information about the storm's development. Is it moving away? Is it moving closer?"
- Ken: Getting back to those two types of warnings, could I send a phone message to you in Spanish that would tell you what to do?
 - Yes. (Juanita)
 - Most of us can get a message in a Facebook page. We can mention that it is a resource in the Rochester community. (Maria)
 - Then it could be announced in Spanish on the local TV and radio station. (Nina)
 - Most of the Spanish speaking population works in hotels or restaurants. You

have to mention to the employers that they should communicate with their employees. (Enrique Sr.)

- To note: people with children in the schools get phone messages about school cancellations and other information in the language spoken in the home.

Who do you trust to be the messenger and to deliver a reliable message?

- Charter Communications is good to deliver service. Another is the city. (Alejandro)
- The school system would be good if people could register with them and get information. (Enrique Jr.)
- The more ways we can use the better. (Alejandro)

Is calling 911 effective in an emergency if you don't speak English?

- Juanita -- Yes, I think it is an issue. Two weeks ago we saw a person who was drunk. He was in the street and we were afraid he would get hit by a car. We got him on the sidewalk and called 911, but they don't speak Spanish. Maybe the police could have somebody who speaks Spanish. (Juanita)
 - Now they tell us to wait while we find somebody who speaks Spanish. The good thing is that they know where you are calling from automatically. It is a good service. (Leo)
 - They are patient, and they try to help us. (Maria)
- For big emergencies, the number is 911. But there are some emergencies that aren't big. We

have to know when to call 911 and when to call the other number. (Maria)

- Graciela observes that she and Miguel Soto used to run a Spanish-language TV show. They worked closely with the fire department and the health department to provide information about vaccinations, other health topics and emergency services. It was on three or four times a week and funded through an Office of Minority Health grant. The Somali community, participants note, have two streaming TV shows, and have a means to announce storms or other emergencies to their community.
- Ken asks if there are other information distribution channels in addition to the school system, Charter Communications, KTCC, Facebook, and phone systems.
 - Juanita notes that information in the grocery stores is usually in both Spanish and English.
- Ken asks about differences between new immigrants who are newly arrived and others who have been here for a much longer period of time. Mayte replies that there are differences depending on the country from which people originate. Alejandro observes that there are many differences among individuals. "Some can be here for years and still not speak a word of English. They are the same as when they arrived." Leo says that for people who have just arrived, a snow storm can be so perplexing

that they will just not go out. They don't know what to do.

When Latino people arrive here, where do they make first connections?

- Church. "At the church we meet, all of us." (Mayte)
- Mostly church but also through the schools. (Juanita)
- "When I arrived I didn't know any English, but I was curious to learn the language. Hawthorne Learning Center was my resource. But a lot of people don't have the will to learn the language. (Maria)

Sustainable change

- Ken says that ultimately he is seeking systems that are sustainable. "It's nice to come here and to listen, that's good. But problems come up all the time. More important is for you to be able to connect, not for somebody to come out to talk to you like this. We need to work on emergency planning to alert you and help you understand the largest threats. But part of emergency planning is working with the planning department and talking about long term planning. We have to make sure that when it comes to streets and speeding cars, or other transportation issues to name just a few examples, that you have a connection to those things that are going on over time. In the end that's more critical than to come here one time to listen."

Appendix 5

Somali Focus Group

August 28, 2014

Rochester Public Library

Participants:

Mohamoud Hamud
 Muse Shiekh
 Mohamed Sheik Nur
 Abdulkadir Dalur
 Jaylani Abdalla
 Ikar M. Ikar
 Abdi Deeq
 Jayani Iama
 Sahra Ahmed
 Fadumo Ahmed

Interpreter

Shukri Ali

Observers

Ken Jones
 Sandi Goslee

Summary: While participants expressed concerns about natural disasters and seasonal challenges that are unfamiliar to equatorial people — snowstorms, tornadoes, thunderstorms — there was also a sense that proportionally these were lesser problems than the past in Somalia. "We came from disaster," one group member observed. Participants observed repeatedly that Somali culture is an oral culture. Spoken messages broadcast via Somali TV on local public access stations are most likely to be heard. Steadily repeated safety messages at public meetings are another favored method of communication. The school network of phone communication in Somali was mentioned as an effective means of spreading information. Cultural

considerations regarding males and females mixing in public spaces were regarded as secondary in the heat of an emergency, but significant in mid- to long-term disaster relief.

What type of emergency most concerns you?

- Fire is a concern. There are apartment buildings with concentrations of Somalis where people are, for instance, burning incense and other things that increase the risk of fire. Many times there are false alarms, so people tend to ignore the alarms over time. So if there is a real fire, lives will be at risk.
- Winter storms and heavy snow is a concern, because Somali people come from a place where the weather is always moderate. They are not familiar with flooding, tornadoes, snow and extreme cold. We need to educate them about cold, snow, the need to stay away from windows in a storm and to take shelter. Most of the community does not understand that.
- Jaylani Abdalla offers this example: "Nineteen years ago when I first came here, there was a big winter storm. But we needed food, so we walked to Cub Foods. By the time I got back, my fingers, my ears, my face were all frozen. I had no knowledge of what this was, and so it was very dangerous. It is the same with the people who are arriving today."

What is the best way for you to get emergency help?

- The first thing is to call 911. That's what we have been told, even before we came to the United States. But is there a better way to get help immediately other than 911? For example, my car stopped on a very cold winter day on 7th Street. I called 911 and they said they would be there in 15 minutes. A lady stopped to help me, but without her it would have been very dangerous. Is there anything else we can do in an emergency except call 911?
- Calling 911 can be hard because the people answering the phones don't speak multiple languages.

What are some of the complications of communicating with Somalis?

- "We are an oral society. We are good at conveying information by word-of-mouth. Written communication is less favorable, since the Roman-letter version of Somali was officially adopted in 1972. Usually if there is something going on that we don't understand, we call somebody else within the Somali community. One thing that would help is to identify people as leaders who others can contact, and make sure that they are accurately informed so they can transmit information to others."
- A lot of people speak Somali but don't read Somali. Many of the people who arrived here as adults don't read Somali. But then children don't necessarily *speak* Somali.

- *Interpretation and translation can present problems.* "I was translating a piece of medical literature into Somali and Arabic. It was easy in Arabic, but very difficult in Somali. Since 1970, new words have not been added. So when you do the Somali translation there often aren't single words to describe a procedure or situation. It is always wordy in Somali. Because there aren't single words you need to explain.
- A younger woman observes that the problem of emergency communication might have as much to do with culture as language. "People don't see it as a big deal that a tornado is coming. My brothers and sisters know the message, but they don't see it as a big deal. There is a language barrier but also a culture barrier. It's some of both.
- Reshaping the message may help. Instead of talking about the weather, maybe it would be better to talk about dangers in terms of environmental issues. Somali people never had much concern with weather in Somalia. It could be more effective to discuss the dangers that face the Somali community resulting from environmental issues.

What are the best ways to convey a message to you?

- It would help when something like a thunderstorm happens if the TV alerts were also in other languages, including Somali.

- Some messages could be communicated on Somali TV. It's only on for a couple hours a day, but if it's on, you see it.
- ECHO DVDs on making winter preparations have been useful. That sort of oral/visual information in Somali is a good way to get information to people, provided they are widely available.
- Such videos could provide content for Somali public access TV.
- The mosque, county offices and the Hawthorne Learning Center are also places where information could be effectively presented. Emergency education could be part of the ESL curriculum at Hawthorne. "When I went there for ESL classes they taught us how to prepare for fire, where to find an exit, other important things to know like that."
- It might also be useful to hire actors to deliver messages that are part of a performance at community events.
- Hire Somali speakers so they're integrated with government. "The city needs to have someone who is a Somali speaker who is charged with working with the emergency management group. Hire a Somali liaison or use someone who is working with the city to do outreach to the Somali community."
- There is not just one way. TV. Community events. Leaflets. It is the constant reminder. That's how you sensitize people to these events. So if on TV you see a picture of a truck picked up and flying in a storm, and you match that with the description in the Somali language — that these are the things that can happen in a storm — that's how people learn.
- "The Somali community advertises by putting up leaflets at the mosque, or at the six halal shops (Somali grocery stores) in the city. A lot of people never watch Somali TV."
- "There could be connection centers for people — places where Somali people are in touch with English speakers who can give them information. IMAA is an example. There could be a TV display in their lobby, for example, that displays information. This would be a way to use existing mechanisms of communication."
- "You should make a website about the weather. Also there are a lot of Somalis who use Facebook. You could communicate with them that way."

Would you participate in a text messaging or voice mail system for emergency messages?

- When we receive a text alert message, it doesn't help somebody like Moses who has cell phone but who doesn't read English. It would help him if it is a message he can understand.
- *Ken Jones: Would you sign up for a text message alert from the county and let me know that you need the information in Somali?*
 - "It is important to send such information in Somali, because we don't want children to lose native tongue."
 - "Such a system might serve a small group of people, but literacy is an issue. I don't know that the elderly will receive the message if it is

in text. Also when think about translating from English, your message could be very wordy in the Somali language. One line in English might be two lines in Somali.

- "It is better to send messages as spoken words."
- "The school system can send parents a recorded message that tells them know what is happening — whether classes are canceled or school is canceled because of weather. If there is a service like that and people can sign up, they would get that call and would get that message in their own language. That would be another way for people who don't read to get a message."

What should the city of Rochester know about cultural practices or beliefs that will help it work with the community in a respectful way?

- "The first thing a female will think of outside of the home is covering up. It's not really necessary from a religious perspective, but it is more of a question of personal preference. If police knock on door and a female opens it and notes that the officer is male, she may run back to get a head covering.
- Is it important to have separate male and female shelters in an emergency? "If it is a matter of life and death, we are not asking who is male and who is female. We will try to safe our loved ones like anyone else."
- "In the case of a disaster the first priority is women and children."
- "When a disaster comes we are all part of the community. When a situation comes that makes us leave our homes, we can all be together, male and female."
- "But I think it would be helpful, because we pray five times a day, to set up a prayer area in the shelter. That would be very important. Also if there are mobile toilets it is good to have water available. We use water all the time. If people are in shelters for extended periods of time, it would be good to have separate sections, even if they are just separated by curtains, to separate male members from female members."
- *Are shelters in Christian churches a problem?*
 - "Yes, that could be a big problem. Somali culture is Islamic. People cannot perform the prayer in a church. They prefer an interfaith area — anywhere that's not a church."
- *Are separate male and female entrances to a shelter important?*
 - "If the problem is something as important as surviving the weather, that wouldn't be an issue."
 - "Somalis are not as conservative as Saudis. In general, people have no issue with one door, but when it comes to living quarters, people would prefer not to sleep in an open space with men and women."
- Mohamoud Hamud observes that the Somali perspective of the threat

from some US disasters is relative.
"We come from disaster."

Who are trusted messengers?

- People at the mosque.
- "Yes, a teacher at the mosque is good. But also, they have their own schedule, and there is also their idea of faith. What can happen tomorrow, well, only God knows."
- The case managers at organizations that that work with Somalis on a daily basis are trusted. I used to be a social worker in town. Everyone expects you be be in the know. They expect you to have the answers. You

have a group of activists, and if they are at a social function they will convey your message.

- Older people usually have somebody to care take them. That person could inform them of what is going on.

Structural problems that impede communication:

- My aunt works seven days a week for \$8 an hour, and she can't afford internet or cable. I'm the person who informs her. Is there another way she can be informed instead of by me?

Appendix 6

October 28 Meeting Notes

Olmsted County Public Health Building October 28, 2014

Method: Attendees at the initial May 19 meeting voiced a desire for reporting on the results from key informant interviews and focus groups. To answer those concerns for reporting back, ECHO organized an evening meeting for October 28. Those attending the May 19 meeting received a written invitation, an email reminder and a phone reminder for the October meeting. The meeting drew one representative of the Cambodian community, five Somali representatives, two Latino representatives, three public officials and ECHO staff.

Attendees were presented a list of findings from key informant interviews and focus groups, and asked to validate these conclusions using an electronic polling system that allowed results to be posted instantly on a screen. Questions were answered by all members of cultural communities in attendance, plus a Rochester Olmsted Planning Department official and one ECHO staff member.

Following this exercise, attendees were asked to fill out a form to identify future hazard mitigation and emergency planning activities in which they would be willing to participate.

Response to poll questions:

Written and spoken English does not meet emergency needs of my community

- agree 89%
- disagree 11%
- don't know

Written emergency warnings in native language are not helpful

- agree 78%
- disagree 22%
- don't know

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language on TV and radio

- Agree 90%
- Disagree 10%
- Don't know

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language via Rochester Alert

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language via text messaging

- Agree 50%
- Disagree 40%
- Don't know 10%

It would be useful to have emergency information in my native language via Twitter

- Agree 20%
- Disagree 60%
- Don't know 20%

It would be useful to create a network of ambassadors to educate and spread emergency information

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful to create contact lists of agencies to share information via masque, church, temple, IMAA

- Agree 80%
- Disagree
- Don't know 20%

It would be useful to hire more bi-lingual staff for 911 (and other critical roles)

- Agree 80%
- Disagree 10%
- Don't know 10%

Preparedness education should be conducted before emergencies using materials such as ECHOs translated DVDs

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful to hold monthly coffee sessions with city officials and cultural leaders

- Agree 80%
- Disagree
- Don't know 20%

Emergency planning should be included as part of the English class curriculum

- Agree 100%
- Disagree
- Don't know

It would be useful for officials to attend community events to build relationships

- Agree 89%
- Disagree
- Don't know 11%

In a discussion following the polling, participants observed that officials should beware the impulse to believe that it is simple to get opinions within and among cultural groups regarding effective emergency messaging. "People can't all be

put together in one box," said participant Miriam Goodson. "There can be a lot of conflict within groups. It takes a lot of work to get into a comfort zone where people are willing to take information."

Participant Mohamoud Hamud noted that meeting simply to meet is not an effective use of time. "We should be meeting about a specific agenda," he said. "Not meeting just to have coffee."

Participation in Future Activities

To conclude the meeting we distributed sign-up sheets on which attendees could mark future activities in which they would be willing to participate. These options, along with responses, included:

1. Review hazard/mitigation plan
(1 participant)
2. Update cultural leader list of cultural advisers to provide support in crisis
(1 participant)
3. Support development of a cultural services unit
(2 participants)
4. Be included on a Leader List
5. Help to develop media videos on EM topics
(1 participant)
6. Provide distribution list contacts/resources
(1 participant)
7. Serve as interpreter/liaison in crisis situations
(1 participant)
8. Be part of a multi-cultural advisory unit
(3 participants)
9. Attend city coffee meetings
(2 participants)