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Responding to Hurricane Laura

The Louisiana Hurricane Response Hub (LA HRH), a program under the [Louisiana Public Health Institute \(LPHI\)](#), is working with its local, state, and federal partners to respond to the aftermath of Hurricane Laura's impact on Louisiana. This includes assessing community needs, connecting agencies and organizations with resources, and identifying opportunities to partner with stakeholders. Several partnership opportunities are listed below. These reflect LPHI's programmatic expertise and initiatives that can be leveraged to provide needed and timely support to impacted communities across the state.

Rapid Response Fund

Through an established funding infrastructure, LPHI can quickly provide rapid cycle funding to community organizations involved in hurricane response and recovery activities. The fund is supported by external donations and contributions.

Example of previous experience: LPHI created a COVID-19 [Rapid Response Fund](#) to benefit Louisiana-based nonprofit organizations that are providing community-based health care services, engaging in direct COVID-19 response, and directly contributing to "flattening the curve" in our community. LPHI received more than 30 applications and funds are currently being distributed to the eight organizations that were selected.

Key elements:

- Manage key project components on behalf of funders: communications, request for proposals process, grantee selection, disbursement of funding, contract and monitoring, and evaluation.
- Ensure oversight and stewardship of donor dollars.

Partnership opportunity:

- Contribute to funding collaborative.
- Inform resource allocation and implementation in communities.

Community Action Forums

LPHI developed a community engagement and advocacy strategy focused on virtual engagement. This strategy can be used to strengthen coordination and implementation of disaster response and recovery activities. A key element of the engagement process is LPHI's Regional Managers, based in each of the nine Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) regions, who have extensive knowledge of the local communities and strong relationships with community organizations, government agencies, and civic leaders.

Example of previous experience: LPHI partnered with LDH to host nine [virtual regional Tele-Town Halls](#). LPHI worked with LDH to schedule and promote the meetings, recruit local panelists, co-moderate, and evaluate results. Topics and questions were solicited from the general public in advance in an effort to address the most pressing community needs.

Key elements:

- Serve as the forum facilitator, the coordinator, or both.
- Coordinate forum logistics, including design, content, speakers, and promotion.
- Equip communities and leaders with tools for community action.
- Connect grassroots organizations with resources and information for implementation efforts.
- Advance digital action and advocacy for community organizations through technical assistance.

Partnership opportunity:

- Contribute resources, including in-kind, to subject matter experts (SMEs) to act as moderator, panelist, etc.

- Promotional support of the events to raise awareness and participation within the community and inform content curation, community priorities, and dissemination.

Public Health Response

LPHI is uniquely situated to assist with and/or administer a wide range of public health programs due to its multi-disciplinary team with expertise in project design and management, data analysis and evaluation, community health assessment, survey design and implementation, and communications.

Examples of previous experience: Following the BP Oil Spill, LPHI administered the [Primary Care Capacity Project](#) that expanded access to high quality, integrated, and sustainable community-based primary care to target Gulf Coast communities. The project lasted six and a half years and was funded by a BP court settlement.

LPHI is currently funded to conduct a comprehensive assessment of behavioral health services in the Greater New Orleans area to determine the impact of COVID-19 on service availability and operations. This rapid assessment will identify opportunities to address current challenges and minimize future risks.

Key elements:

- Strategic program design, implementation, and analysis.
- Project management.
- Subject matter expertise in a variety of areas pertaining to public health.
- Targeted technical assistance.

Partnership opportunities:

- Collaboration on funding opportunities.
- Provide feedback on community-specific priority areas.

Government Agency Support:

LPHI partners with government agencies to facilitate the rapid mobilization of financial and human resources necessary to mitigate additional hurricane impacts. LPHI is exempt from many of the time-consuming procurement requirements that limit rapid response from government agencies. In addition, LPHI has the organizational and financial capacity, and administrative flexibility and nimbleness to assist with proposal development and quickly execute contracts/cooperative agreements.

Example of previous experience: Following Hurricane Katrina, LPHI was the third-party administrator on behalf of the state to design, manage, and implement the \$1 million Primary Care Access and Stabilization Grant, which was funded through CMS, in order to stabilize the safety net health care system in New Orleans.

Key elements:

- Serve as fiscal agent and hiring mechanism.
- Administer, implement, and oversee funding.
- Identify and connect local, state, and federal resources, including SMEs.

Partnership opportunity:

- Engage in public/private partnerships.
- Collaborate on funding opportunities.

LPHI is committed to ensuring all Louisianans have just and fair opportunities to be healthy and well. Through our work, we create authentic partnerships with partners and communities to align action for health.

To discuss these opportunities or other potential partnership ideas, please reach out to Michelle Lackovic via email at mlackovic@lphi.org.