

# WHEN DISASTER STRIKES:

## A guide for Community Foundations in Aotearoa NZ



in partnership with



COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS  
OF CANADA  
*all for community*

### INTRODUCTION

New Zealand has already seen an outpouring of support for Christchurch not seen on a scale before. Internationally the online giving community is far more advanced than was the case in 2011 following the devastating earthquake in Christchurch. We are also seeing a real shock factor around growing ethnic and religion-based attacks worldwide.

This is a first for Community Foundations in New Zealand and we are learning as we go much around preparedness work for disaster response and recovery.

Much of the information contained in this document comes from our counterparts at Community Foundations of Canada, which has been around far longer and has helped a number of Community Foundations respond in times of emergency, including the Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre attacks in Peterborough and Quebec City and the wildfires in Fort McMurray. Further information has been gathered from The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) based in Australia, a leader in exploring philanthropy's role and response to disasters. Other information has been gathered from various local sources, including a section on care of donors and a glimpse into the future, a silver lining of how a local disaster can help your Community Foundation to strengthen in its community leadership.

## SETTING THE SCENE

Worldwide human-made and natural disasters are on the rise, with natural disasters affecting over 170 million people around the world each year, an increase from 60 million just 30 years ago. Natural disasters caused economic losses up to \$225 billion across the world in 2018.

Government and emergency relief organisations are often first to respond when a disaster strikes. In most cases, the communities also rally together to help each other in clean-up efforts and with fundraising initiatives.

What we know from other's experience around the world is that there is a unique and valuable role for philanthropy in disaster prevention, response and recovery.

The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) based in Australia have found that *“the usual rules, conventions and processes in grant making do not necessarily apply in a disaster. This is true of government grants, business donations and the individual donor who puts a coin into an appeal tin. The way traumatised communities access and utilise grants is also different from the traditional approach to grant applications.”*

Governments often respond for political reasons, corporations tend to give and move on, and response groups such as Victim Support and the Red Cross are there for emergency management. Community Foundations, however, are able to respond with the long view in mind, develop deep and trusted partnerships, and have greater flexibility in what and how long they can fund.

This document is an overview for Community Foundations who are experiencing a disaster or want to be proactive should their community experience one. The first part outlines the unique role of a Community Foundation and the second section is a guide for Community Foundations in each phase preparing for and after experiencing a disaster.

## SECTION ONE: A COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S UNIQUE ROLE

### a) The long view

The long-term resilience of community is built into the DNA of Community Foundations and offers a unique asset to communities affected by disasters. The FRRR's experience taught them that while early engagement is important, starting to grant approximately 12 months after a disaster is philanthropy's sweet spot. This gives enough time for emergency response and governments to raise and grant funds for immediate needs (response and recovery). In fact, the FRRR still provides grants *nine years later* to several initiatives that serve communities affected by the devastating 2009 Victorian bushfires in eastern Australia. This has given the communities time to think and plan strategically without political pressures or needing to spend raised money too quickly.

With this long view in mind, Community Foundations don't need to wait for a disaster to strike. Supporting preparedness strategies is also a key role to be undertaken.

## b) Community led

*“At FRRR, we know long term community recovery takes time - time to conduct adequate research and planning to ensure that social and physical infrastructure is appropriate, sustainable and meets the future needs of the community. For this reason, FRRR’s natural disaster recovery programs typically begin 12 months after an initial disaster and, depending on available funding, last for several years afterwards.”*

A Community Foundation’s role after a disaster is not just about securing funding. One of the most important pieces for a Community Foundation is to work with other funders and organisations to be responsive and flexible to the community’s needs. Disaster can change a community and the way a Community Foundation may be used to operating.

Flexibility and relevance are key to a Community Foundation’s response during and after recovery. This means allowing the time and space for the community to learn and express where they feel the greatest needs are, which usually evolve over time.

In several cases, funders have created a clearing house mechanism where community organisations would only need to submit one application form rather than having them fill out different applications for each of the various funding organisations. The workload on community-serving organisations increases significantly during disaster recovery, so these types of collaborations between funders are key to helping organisations focus on what really matters. Not only that, supporting leadership in the community will help to avoid burnout, duplication and improve response skills.

There are a few areas where a Community Foundation can support community leaders: hosting community conversations, training organisations in healing circles, supporting ‘who do we work with’ networks, supporting cultural leadership, exploring deeply the impacts to mental health and wellbeing, developing Vital Signs research or data supported research of the community to better understand gaps, and much more.

*“Other mechanisms such as Regional Donation Accounts (allowing communities to collect and administer funds for their own programs), a clearing-house service (allowing grant seekers to submit only one grant application to one organisation and feel confident that it would reach the most appropriate donor) and the leverage mechanism (attracting additional funding by applying a co-funding principle, ensuring that the impact of donations were maximised), were important to the success of the overall recovery efforts and should be replicated”.*

### c) Collaboration and partnerships

One of the Community Foundation's greatest strengths, even before a disaster, is their ability to collaborate and build deep networks outside of philanthropy. Given that disasters often leave widespread and long-term social impacts, collaboration is essential in designing and implementing preparedness, response and recovery strategies. Working with government, disaster relief organisations, community groups, cultural communities, and the private sector are important to rebuilding a community. When communication is open and trust is built, response can be timely, opportunities are expanded, and mechanisms can be put in place to avoid duplication or missed information. Community Foundations should look to expand their networks before and in response to a disaster in order to help mobilise their community for a successful response and recovery. Since Community Foundations are there for the long term, these relationships before and after disasters will build a strong interdependence for future work together.

*“The FRRR program helped to build a greater level of collaboration between Government and the philanthropic sector. As a partner with the Victorian Government through the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority. (VBRRA), FRRR was able to widen the Government’s recovery funding scope, and demonstrate the benefits of partnering with philanthropy”.*

## CASE STUDIES

### *Case study: Partnerships mobilise Wood Buffalo response*

The wildfires in Fort McMurray and communities in the surrounding Wood Buffalo area in May of 2016 were devastating, with approximately 88,000 people were evacuated, making it one of the largest and most successful evacuations in Albertan history. By the time the fire was under control, an estimated 2,400 structures had been destroyed. As first responders and frontline organisations addressed the immediate crisis in Fort McMurray, Community Foundations from across Alberta pooled their resources to create a Rebuilding Fort McMurray Fund. With over \$1.4M raised, the Edmonton Community Foundation joined 15 other organisations who created the Wood Buffalo Fire Recovery Funders Circle to form partnerships with groups such as Suncor Energy Foundation, the municipality, Red Cross and many more. This group met to share information and applications from projects coming forward from the community. During this time the Wood Buffalo Community Foundation formed and will be a key partner in the ongoing efforts to rebuild and reimagine a thriving community.

### *Case study: Community comes together in response to hate - Peterborough & Quebec City*

In November 2015 the only mosque in Peterborough, Masjid al-Salaam, was the target of a hate crime: arsonists smashed a window and used Molotov cocktails that caused over \$80,000 worth of damage to the building. Although no one was physically harmed, the event triggered fear throughout the local Muslim community. Remarkably, the community united to support the members of Kawartha Muslim Religious Association (KMRA) in many ways, including a crowdfunding campaign that raised more than \$110,000 in 30 hours. The Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough teamed up to manage the surplus donations and establish a fund to support the YWCA Crossroads Shelter and Five Counties Children's Centre in perpetuity.

On January 29th 2017, the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City experienced a tragic mass shooting that killed 6 people, seriously injured several others, and spread fear throughout the local Muslim community. Local leaders and community members showed great strength in rallying together to support one another. The Fondation Québec Philanthrope created a fund to support the local Muslim community and encouraged everyone to collaborate during the difficult time. The funds of the "Philanthropic Fund for a Society Toward Social Tolerance" first went to organisations that could help support the community, and in the long term will be used to support initiatives that promote a socially tolerant society.

### *Case study: San Francisco's proactive approach*

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in 2005, it was the communities of colour and low-income neighbourhoods of New Orleans that were the hardest-hit. Meanwhile, on the West Coast, The San Francisco Foundation (TSFF) recognized the vulnerability of its own city to a natural disaster, and decided to be proactive in protecting its most marginalized and under-resourced communities. To that end, TSFF secured grant money to establish a readiness fund and then teamed up with community-based organisations who served vulnerable residents. In 2007, TSFF began an externally-facing program, this time going right to potentially affected community members to educate and raise awareness of risks and what to do in the event of a disaster.

## SECTION TWO Disaster Readiness and Response: WHAT YOUR FOUNDATION CAN DO:

Community Foundations have different roles to play before, during and after a disaster. Below, we outline four phases: Risk Reduction, Response, Recovery, and Rebuild and provide suggestions for the role of a Community Foundation in each phase.

### A WORD ON ADVOCACY

When a community experiences a disaster, they often see major issues surface that may require a long-term response from government. For example, issues of racial inequality surfaced during and in the response efforts to hurricane Katrina. Your Community Foundation may find yourself needing to shift into an advocacy role in order to support policy changes or different response strategies during or after a disaster. Here are a few ideas for your Community Foundation to pay attention to ([The Disaster Playbook](#))<sup>1</sup>:

Category	Description	Role of CF	Grants focus	Partnership/community knowledge focus	Fundraising focus
<b>RISK REDUCTION AND DISASTER READY</b>  <i>Timeline: Ongoing</i>	<p>This phase is focused on preparedness and resilience in advance of a disaster.</p> <p>Research shows that being prepared is crucial to the success of a community's response. This includes provisioning significant funds for disaster preparedness and developing strategies to build community resilience that</p>	<p>The role of a Community Foundation in this phase is to be involved in a community disaster task force or start one. You don't need to wait for a disaster to occur to begin the conversation. Begin partnering with those who affect change, such as your regional government, on their disaster relief preparations and seek to build collaboration amongst other funders, community organisations and</p>	<p>Provide grants for community conversations that educate and create disaster readiness strategies</p> <p>Support organisations working to put in place disaster readiness and resilience strategies</p> <p>Consider funding projects or research that addresses the root causes of disaster (environmental, security, etc.)</p> <p>Develop and communicate your preparedness plan for your organisation with</p>	<p>Build relationships with other funders, not-for-profits, emergency management agencies, businesses, Cultural communities, and governments to develop a philosophy of shared responsibility that is connected to community. This can be done through:</p> <p>Regular taskforce meetings, hosting community conversations, setting up an application clearing house that is ready to be implemented when a disaster strikes</p> <p>Practice co-funding community initiatives so</p>	<p>Consider starting a disaster relief fund at your foundation so that when a disaster strikes, you are able to respond quickly and strategically</p> <p>Work with donors and board members to raise their awareness about the effects of disaster on communities and the benefits of being prepared and connected</p>

	<p>lessen the overall impact of a natural disaster on individuals, businesses, governments and communities</p> <p>“Estimates from organised philanthropy in the US determined that for every \$1 spent on disaster preparedness, at least \$7 is saved in casualties, property damage, and the like”</p>	<p>individuals. Together, you can create Disaster Response Protocols so everyone is clear about ‘who does what when’</p> <p>Given the long-standing use and knowledge of ecosystems of Cultural peoples, engage cultural communities in disaster preparation and response plans.</p> <p>Develop an internal preparedness plan (that is how your staff, board, volunteers, policies, etc will operate during a disaster). Also create an external plan that will guide how you will assist in the time of disaster</p>	<p>grantees and partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with key grantees to develop MOUs so you can work together when a disaster strikes</li> <li>- Support and engage cultural communities in disaster resilience planning</li> </ul>	<p>that trust and funding mechanisms can be tested prior to a disaster.</p> <p>Consider partnering with other local or provincial Community Foundations to increase support and networks.</p>	
<p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <p><i>Timeline: Time of disaster to 1 month after ** timelines are approximate</i></p>	<p>This phase occurs when your community is in a state of emergency. Urgent needs</p>	<p>In this phase, your foundation can seek to mobilise and coordinate communication amongst community</p>	<p>It is advised that Community Foundations limit the amount of funding in the initial months during and after a disaster in order to</p>	<p>Support the work of the emergency response organisations such as Victim Support, the Red Cross and Government</p>	<p>Mobilise your communication channels quickly to let your community and donors</p>

	<p>must be met in a timely manner to preserve life and ensure major and essential services such as food, shelter, communication, roads, etc are available for the community.</p>	<p>organisations and funders. Work in collaboration with emergency response teams to ensure the provisions of basic services for displaced populations and help to mobilise volunteers through your networks.</p> <p>Support the work of assessing damages and critical needs.</p> <p>Assist with connecting case managers and pro-bono legal services to the community</p> <p>Support or lead community conversations that inform your community on topics such as: disaster relief processes, legal rights of disaster victims, navigating applications and basic services, consideration for Cultural communities</p>	<p>support the long-term needs of your community (see below). However, if there are gaps in funding or the abilities of the emergency response organisations, your foundation can respond accordingly.</p> <p>Consider funding town halls, community conversations or talking circles that bring people together to create coordinated approaches for response.</p> <p>Create clear communication and information sharing with your grantees</p>	<p>strategies.</p> <p>Create or support a funders table</p> <p>Mobilise volunteers</p> <p>Approach local or provincial organisations that are interested in partnership</p> <p>Help enable communication between response teams and community</p> <p>Help support improvements in the efficiency of logistics systems.</p> <p>Consider working with other Community Foundations who are also affected by the disaster to share ideas, resources, fundraising efforts, communications, etc.</p>	<p>know about your support and response.</p> <p>Deliver a strategy that supports the immediate fundraising needs of your community and create mechanisms that invest in the community for the long term. For example, this could be working with donors to create endowments or working to create disaster relief funds (see above)</p> <p>Seek partnerships to pool philanthropic funds for greater impact</p>
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<p><b>RECOVERY</b></p> <p><i>Timeline: Approx taking place 1-12 months after a disaster</i></p>	<p>In this phase, the emergency needs of the community have been met and the focus is now on finding ways for the community to recover from the disaster. In this phase people are focused on the steps they need to take to rebuild their lives. This includes assessing and repairing community infrastructure and healing from physical injuries.</p> <p>Resources must go towards supporting the mental health of community members as they return and cope with the trauma that they and their community have experienced.</p>	<p>During this phase, Community Foundations are an active and well-networked partner and are able to mobilise in response to the community needs, During this time, corporate donors, emergency response organisations and governments may no longer have the means to accept donations or respond to community needs. Continued collaboration with partners to support community led solutions are key in this phase.</p>	<p>While continuing to focus on the long-term needs of the community (see below), you can begin by creating a simple and accessible grants programs in this phase</p> <p>Have grant criteria decided by local organisations and be adaptable to the community’s changing needs</p> <p>In this phase, focus on psychological recovery, volunteer fatigue, and support for emerging leaders</p> <p>Work with cultural leaders to support the unique needs of their community</p> <p>Consider funding staffing needs of local organisations who feel the extra workload as they support community during this phase</p>	<p>Create a clearinghouse service that is used for liaising with other funders in order to process applications. This will allow grant seekers to apply to many funders by submitting only one application</p> <p>Consider funding community engagement coordinators to develop a plan for project funding to assist in different regions</p> <p>Collaborate with key funders to avoid duplication in all aspects of granting, funding, creating community knowledge sharing platforms, etc.</p> <p>Work with media to continue to share information.</p> <p>Continue meeting with partners and support community conversations to assess needs and the direction of the recovery process.</p>	<p>Work with government and other funders that offer matching donations</p> <p>Look for leverage and take a proactive role to expand the sum of funds (offer to partner with gov, businesses, individuals and orgs).</p> <p>Continue to work with donors that have a long-term view in mind (see below). Find ways to connect with groups, such as Victim Support and Red Cross, to see if they would be willing to partner on long term funding needs.</p> <p>Communicate your unique role in supporting the long term needs of the community (beyond emergency relief)</p> <p>Use your expertise to assist the community in fundraising efforts</p>
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## A FINAL NOTE ON DONOR CARE

It's easy to overlook the important long-term opportunities that harnessing generosity and a general community 'desire to help' can bring. Some suggestions would include:

- Complete capture of donor data for later analysis (name and e-mail at a minimum; address and phone number in addition preferable)
- Effectively utilise volunteers to handwrite personal thank you cards to donors and supporters for whom you have an address; send a customised e-mail thank you that is separate from the receipt to other donors
- Issue heartfelt thank you's across all promotional platforms, identifying key facts such as number of individual donors, number of donors from the region, number of donors from NZ, number of businesses, etc
- Organise a thank you event for local donors, getting appropriate speakers from the community
- Once disaster projects are identified, send regular e-mail updates to donors
- Send communication about other projects in which the foundation is involved, in order to show your breadth of community involvement

## CONCLUSION

Natural and human-made disasters change a community. While the devastation can have a lasting negative affect, many communities rise from the disaster stronger, more connected, and better prepared should any other crisis hit their region.

We hope this resource has made you aware of the need for preparedness measures and the crucial role your Community Foundation can play in the response, recovery, and rebuild strategies in your community.

Keeping an eye on the future there is a silver lining from disasters that happen in the community; by exhibiting resilience, strong leadership and real impact you will grow your credibility and can leverage future long-term support from the donor base.

## LIST OF RESOURCES:

1. FRRR has a great disaster response framework and resources: [http://www.frrr.org.au/cb\\_pages/natural\\_disaster\\_response\\_framework.php](http://www.frrr.org.au/cb_pages/natural_disaster_response_framework.php)
2. FRRR's Lessons Learned from 2009 Bushfires: [http://www.frrr.org.au/resources/LessonsInDisasterRecovery\\_FRRRVicBushfiresResponse2009.pdf](http://www.frrr.org.au/resources/LessonsInDisasterRecovery_FRRRVicBushfiresResponse2009.pdf)
3. Council on Foundations Disaster Relief Practical Guide: <https://www.cof.org/content/disaster-relief-practical-guide-foundations-and-corporations>

4. The Aboriginal Disaster Resilience Planning (ADRP) approach has been designed with aboriginal communities in mind. The ADRP process includes a user-friendly guide to help you work through the various steps to increase resiliency in your community <http://www.jibc.ca/news/new-online-resource-launched-strengthen-disaster-resiliency-aboriginal-communities>
5. Aboriginal Disaster Resilience Knowledge Sharing Toolkit: Outlines how to use storytelling and talking circles to facilitate the sharing of Traditional Knowledge (TK) about Aboriginal resilience among TK holders, their communities and local emergency management practitioners. It focuses on accessing information about community strengths, past emergencies, existing risks and wise practices to help Aboriginal communities become more resilient to disasters. [https://adrp.jibc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ADRP - Knowledge\\_Sharing\\_Toolkit1.pdf](https://adrp.jibc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/ADRP - Knowledge_Sharing_Toolkit1.pdf)
6. Canada's Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction: <https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/mrgnc-mngmnt/dsstr-prvntn-mtgn/pltfm-dsstr-rsk-rdctn/index-en.aspx>
7. The Center for Disaster Philanthropy: a full-time resource to help donors make more thoughtful disaster-related giving decisions and maximize the impact of their gifts. It includes toolkits, tip sheets, resources and impact stories: <http://disasterphilanthropy.org/>
8. The Disaster Playbook: a collection of strategies, stories and resources compiled from submissions from grantmakers nationwide, in order to advance learning and understanding on how the philanthropic sector can respond to and, in some cases, lead the recovery in their communities, while implementing the lessons learned and preparedness practices in order to mitigate damage and loss of life should a disaster strike. <http://disasterplaybook.org/about/how-to-use-the-playbook/>
9. Creating Order from Chaos: <http://www.dupontfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/duPont-Disaster-Relief-Guide.pdf>

