

WALTER & ELISE HAAS FUND



SAN FRANCISCO DISASTER FOOD SYSTEM REPORT

*Analysis and Recommendations
to Advance Food Resiliency for
Low-Income and Vulnerable
Populations*

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TO THE READER

The constant threat of seismic activity is a reality for Bay Area residents. No amount of funding will change the certainty that our region will continue to experience earthquakes with potentially devastating consequences. What can change is the ability of non-profits to mitigate damage and continue operations quickly through planning, training, and infrastructure investment.

After witnessing the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Walter and Elise Haas Fund recognized that our communities needed investment in preparedness. In 2006, W&EHF approved a disaster preparedness funding initiative that sought to improve the capacity of intermediaries to train non-profit and faith based organizations, to create training templates and standards for disaster resiliency, and to invest in supplies and equipment for front-line organizations serving vulnerable residents.

The 25th anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake offers an opportunity to reflect upon what our funding has achieved. To date, W&EHF has invested \$2.85 million in local preparedness. Along with a few other funders, most notably the San Francisco Foundation, we can point to the expanded capacity of the Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters on both sides of the Bay: training hundreds of non-profit organizations and congregations and helping them create business continuity plans. Our investments shored up a network of 24 well-trained and equipped disaster resilient organizations as critical, trusted nonprofits in their neighborhoods; helped pass groundbreaking legislation (AB903) enabling nonprofits to be reimbursed by state government for expenses incurred in responding to a catastrophic disaster; and supported plans that incorporate community-based multi-lingual media into disaster communications strategies. Today, local government coordinates its plans with non-profits, and trained faith communities, through the San Francisco Interfaith Council, have pledged to support one another in a disaster.

Despite what has been achieved, numerous weaknesses exist. This report highlights the fragility of the disaster food pipeline in San Francisco, focuses on lessons learned from other disasters, and suggests opportunities for philanthropy to shore up the disaster food system.

We know that local funders will step up after a disaster. Certainly, those funds will be vital in rebuilding. But we encourage funders to consider investing in preparedness, which can mitigate damage and help our communities' most vulnerable residents come through the next big disaster. Ensuring that food and water is available to those in need is a critical first step.

Thanks to Cissie Bonini, whose expertise and commitment created this report. We also thank the many organizations that spoke with her, and that are working to keep our communities safe during a disaster. And thank you for reading it and considering its recommendations.

Stephanie Rapp, Senior Program Officer
Walter and Elise Haas Fund

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San Francisco Disaster Food System

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a case statement and analysis of San Francisco's disaster food system for vulnerable populations. It identifies how disaster food resiliency for low-income and vulnerable populations can be advanced and highlights what modest philanthropic funding to improve emergency food systems can achieve.

The report's methodology consists of analysis and synthesis of in-depth, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and literature review. Interviews and focus group discussions involved 19 representatives of government agencies, coalitions, and local and national nonprofits. The representatives were selected to represent differing perspectives on San Francisco's disaster food system. A summary of key interview findings appears in the appendices. Four national food providers involved in either Hurricane Katrina or Superstorm Sandy also were interviewed for their insights about disaster food systems, lessons learned, and recommendations.

This report finds that the most effective disaster planning is localized and involves the active participation of neighborhood and community-based representatives. For marginalized neighborhoods, pre-planning and coordination are especially important so that, following a disaster, responders can address the needs of low-income and vulnerable populations as they activate rapid response and recovery. However, interviews with key city disaster planners and community-based representatives reveal major gaps in San Francisco's disaster food system. Geographic issues (for example, if bridges are damaged, San Francisco will become an island) can hinder access to food and pre-placed food and water are likely to be inadequate. Right after a disaster, coordination is essential for distributing existing food resources. Although large food resources will be available later, the city hasn't identified distribution points or how food will be transported to these locations.

City disaster planners want community-based representatives at the planning table, yet community-based organizations (CBOs) and neighborhood coalitions lack the staffing, disaster knowledge, and funding to participate. These organizations are already working at capacity to feed the city's hungry, which creates an inefficient bottleneck (see figure 1

and 2 below). This report recommends funding CBO staff so they can participate in planning efforts. Interviewees also indicated a need to hire individuals with knowledge of San Francisco’s unique food system to “oversee the whole picture.” Recommendations include funding experienced staff positions at the SF-Marin Food Bank and SF Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters to work with neighborhood agencies, initiate needs assessments, participate in citywide emergency feeding planning, coordinate or participate in table-tops (need to define) and drills, and advocate for funding and reimbursement agreements.

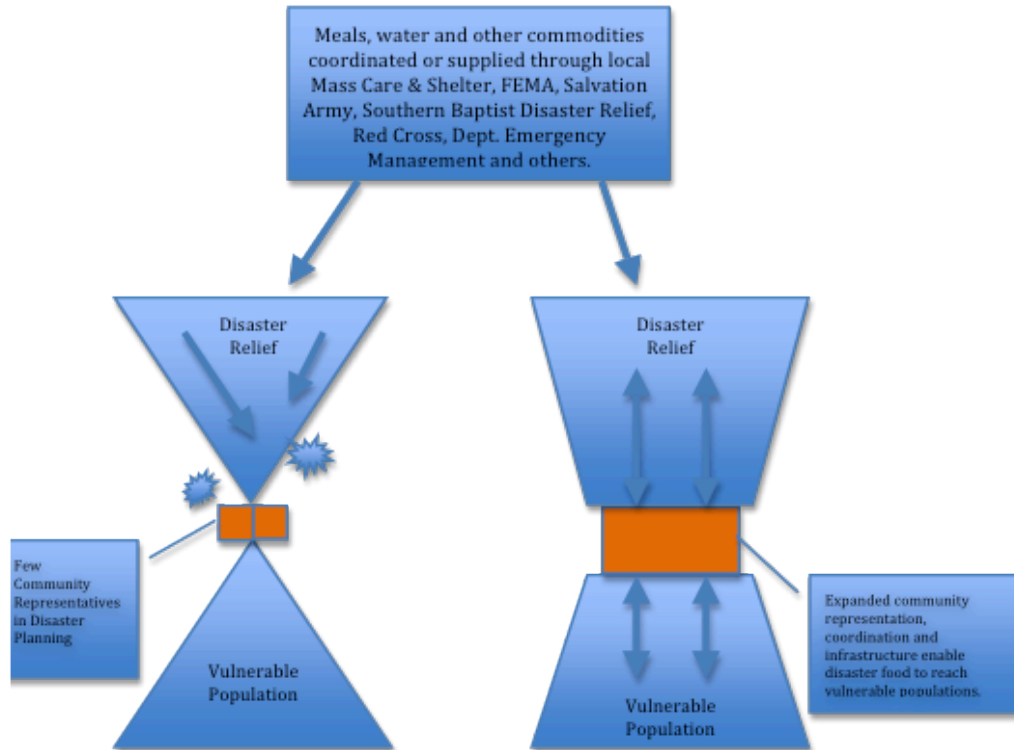


Figure 1: Current Situation
 Bottleneck preventing disaster planning incorporating localized needs of low-income and vulnerable populations

Figure 2: Recommended
 Fund Food Banks and other community representatives to improve emergency food coordination and implementation.

This report identifies five top lessons learned from food providers with disaster experience from Hurricane Katrina or Superstorm Sandy:

- 1) Pre-disaster planning with multi-level collaboration is essential;
- 2) Rapid and coordinated food distribution is key for vulnerable populations;
- 3) Food supply chains will be severely disrupted;
- 4) Robust communication systems are critical; and
- 5) Local funding and reimbursements are necessary.

Based on lessons learned from past disasters, a literature review of effective disaster strategies, and interviews with key stakeholders, this report recommends the following actions to improve San Francisco's disaster food system to benefit low-income and vulnerable populations:

- 1) Fund community (ground-level) disaster representation;
- 2) Support collaboration and pre-planning;
- 3) Conduct assessments, drills and table-tops;
- 4) Improve communication systems;
- 5) Expand supply of pre-placed food and water;
- 6) Engage the private and corporate sector; and
- 7) Expand community preparedness efforts.

The following key recommendations for philanthropic interventions to improve disaster food systems benefiting low-income and vulnerable populations are specifically for San Francisco County but may be applicable to other Bay Area counties.

- ❖ **FUND THE SF-MARIN FOOD BANK** to improve its disaster feeding systems and participate in the planning and development of the San Francisco Feeding Plan. Fund a full-time disaster food program manager and associated administrative costs including trainings for three years. Fund the SF- Marin Food Bank to enhance disaster communication systems and coordinate pre-placed meals.
- ❖ **FUND AN EMERGENCY FEEDING PLAN COORDINATOR WITH SF COLLABORATING AGENCIES RESPONDING TO DISASTERS (SF CARD)** to coordinate with neighborhood agencies, conduct workshops and trainings, initiate needs assessments, participate in citywide emergency feeding planning, coordinate table-tops and drills, enhance community preparedness, advocate for funding and reimbursement agreements, and conduct special events. Especially important is that the person in this position facilitate, train, and coordinate disaster feeding plans with the Tenderloin Hunger Taskforce.

- ❖ **FUND STAFF AT THE LOCAL CBO AND COALITION AGENCIES TO PARTICIPATE IN DISASTER PLANNING, TRAINING, AND PREPAREDNESS.** Fund key CBOs that feed the poor such as SF Meals on Wheels, Project Open Hand, St. Anthony’s, and Glide Foundation (which together serve almost four million meals per year). Support existing collaborations—the Tenderloin Hunger Taskforce, Neighborhood Empowerment Network, and NICOS—and feeding-related organizations in neighborhoods where vulnerable populations are concentrated such as Providence Foundation in the Bayview.
- ❖ **FUND 50,000 PRE-PLACED DISASTER FOOD KITS** containing meals, water, and preparedness education for people who are homebound and other critically vulnerable populations such as those receiving in-home support services. Fund 25,000 emergency meals for vulnerable individuals in targeted, underserved neighborhoods (Chinatown, Tenderloin, and Bayview).

While the findings in this report accurately reflect the research, the analysis was affected by resource constraints, which limited how many stakeholders could be interviewed. Further research might include interviews with representatives from SNAP, DAAS, SF Food Systems, and with stakeholders in neighborhoods not included in this report (the Sunset, Mission, etc.).

San Francisco Disaster Food System

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This report diagnoses San Francisco's readiness to provide emergency food to vulnerable populations in the event of a disaster. It sheds light on the urgency of need and can inspire funders to participate in tangible solutions. Lessons learned from national food providers that have experienced a disaster, collected for this report, help inform the recommendations for how the city can improve its disaster food system.

Pre-identified areas of concern include:

- Minimal emergency food coordination and supply in low-income neighborhoods with many vulnerable individuals (Bayview, Hunters Point, Tenderloin, Chinatown)
- Lack of an adequate emergency food pipeline
- Limited Food Bank capacity to respond in a disaster;
- Need for stakeholder agencies to build their response capacity and collaborate
- Need to shore up the emergency food infrastructure

CONTEXT

A LARGE-SCALE DISASTER IS LIKELY

For the San Francisco Bay Area, a large-scale disaster is not a matter of *if* but *when*. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, there is a 63% chance of a large earthquake occurring in here in the next 30 years. Seismic events are not the only worry. Climate change, terrorism, fires, and tsunamis also put San Francisco communities at risk. Low-income and vulnerable communities in particular will be disproportionately affected by a disaster.

LARGE NUMBERS OF LOW-INCOME AND VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

Recent economic trends note the widening income gap in San Francisco. While the city has the largest number of very wealthy individuals in the country, rates of poverty are rising.¹ An estimated one in four San Franciscans are at risk of food insecurity based on low incomes.² Older downtown areas (Chinatown, South of Market, the Inner Mission, and the Tenderloin) are particularly vulnerable to seismic events: They have the highest population density in the Western states, and buildings are among the oldest and most poorly maintained.³ Residents in these neighborhoods are largely low-income and rely heavily on social services.

One in four San Franciscans is food insecure based on low incomes.

2013 SF FOOD SECURITY
TASKFORCE REPORT

GEOGRAPHIC AND OTHER LIABILITIES

San Francisco is a densely populated peninsula that can easily become an inaccessible island. An emergency can bring about major transportation disruptions, disabling roads and bridges, halting public transit, and hindering automobile traffic. Tsunamis may render water transportation inoperative. Food and water will become secondary priorities behind responding to life-and-death emergencies and providing shelter. The fact that storage space for emergency food and water within the city is limited and costly adds another liability.

METHODOLOGY

This report analyzes and synthesizes findings from in-depth, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and literature review. Interviews and focus group discussions involved 19 representatives of government agencies, coalitions, and local and national nonprofits. They were selected to represent differing perspectives on San Francisco's disaster food system: those of government, food banks, feeding programs, food-related collaborations, national disaster responders, and neighborhoods whose residents are mostly low-income or vulnerable (Chinatown, Tenderloin, and Bayview-Hunters Point).

Agencies represented in this survey include:

- San Francisco-Marin Food Bank
- Alameda County Food Bank
- Meals on Wheels
- Project Open Hand,
- Glide Foundation
- St. Anthony Foundation

- Bay Area Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- SF Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters (CARD)
- Bay Area United Way
- Bayview Hunters Point YMCA
- NICOS Chinese Health Coalition
- Tenderloin Hunger Task Force
- SF Food Security Task Force
- CA Resilience Alliance
- SF City Administrator’s Office for Neighborhood Resiliency
- Neighborhood Empowerment Network
- SF Department of Emergency Management
- SF Human Services Agency (responsible for mass care and shelter)

Four national food providers involved in either Hurricane Katrina or Superstorm Sandy also were interviewed for their disaster food system insights, lessons learned, and recommendations. They represented community service coalitions, local food banks, and emergency feeding initiatives.

A review of literature included community vulnerability studies, disaster reports (including official reports that followed disasters), and disaster-planning reports.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM KATRINA & SANDY

The following five lessons represent the synthesis of interviews with four national food providers involved in either Hurricane Katrina or Superstorm Sandy:

TOP FIVE DISASTER FOOD SYSTEM LESSONS LEARNED

1. Pre-disaster planning with multilevel collaboration is essential.
2. Rapid, coordinated food distribution is key for vulnerable populations.
3. Adequate disaster food supply chain must be ensured.
4. Robust communication systems are needed.
5. Local funding must be in place.

1. Pre-disaster planning with multilevel collaboration

All interviewees emphasized the essential need for pre-disaster planning and collaboration. This was also the top identified need by disaster planners and community organizations. Participants mentioned vulnerable populations were left out because their neighborhoods were unprepared or the state and federal response did not match the community needs. Interviewees cited the importance of knowing the location of vulnerable populations and identifying their needs in advance. “A lot of resources come in but it’s all about management,” one provider said. “You have to have planning in place.” Providers also emphasized the need to have both a plan and a system in place to mitigate post-disaster chaos. Said one Katrina provider, “There was no planning whatsoever. ... The biggest surprise for me was the amount of chaos and how people got geographically isolated. ... (People) were cut off from resources and opportunities for food. ... People were left behind.” Interviews highlighted the unique needs of low-income and vulnerable populations that can only be addressed through representation at the planning table

These nonprofit leaders also discussed the importance of multilevel collaboration. “Create structures that allow all levels to speak to each other—philanthropy, community, government,” said one. The need to be fluid and adapt structures to accommodate new resources such as through FEMA also was mentioned: “Make sure ahead (of time) you are connected to key areas of government.” The need for ongoing relationship-building also was stressed. “That’s critical—you have to keep your agency relationships going. ... You’ve got to have your base and keep refreshing it. It’s not a one-time exercise,” a provider said. Many providers emphasized that collaboration must continue through all levels of the disaster cycle, from immediate response through long-term recovery.

“I took for granted that there were thoughtful systems in place. Not true. We need to solve our own problems.”

KATRINA FOOD PROVIDER

2. Rapid and Coordinated Food Distribution

All stressed the critical need for immediate and coordinated food distribution. Rapid distribution reduces how long people experience scarcity and can prevent neighborhood fear, violence, and trauma. A recurring theme was how poor people were cut off from resources. “Those vulnerable before (the disaster) are going to be the worst off,” said one. Food responders talked about how they felt “on their own” after the disaster. Perceived

“There is a ticking time clock, as the effect is very localized and the people have dire need.”

SUPERSTORM SANDY
FOOD PROVIDER

food scarcity created fear and, in some cases, significant civil unrest and violence. Lack of accurate information, curfews, and other restrictions increased public fear. Providers emphasized that the chaos and confusion in the disaster's aftermath prevent any last-minute planning. They also emphasized that responding to different types of disasters requires flexibility and agility.

3. Ensuring Adequate Food Supply

Having a resilient food chain or food supply was listed as a critical need. "Don't take for granted food streams," one provider warned. In both Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy, disruptions in the system for delivering food created gaps and limited access to food in many areas. Food quality was compromised, too. One Katrina interviewee said, "You have to think about all those stages (relief, recovery and long-term recovery) and what that means for food access and your supply chain and incorporate any other environmental concerns about food being compromised."

4. Robust Communication Systems

Communication was a key concern during the immediate response and the longer-term recovery efforts. Food providers said it was difficult to get information about their constituents' needs and the status of response operations. "It's important to really understand what is happening and when," explained a Katrina provider, and another noted, "Communication was a huge problem. ... How do I reach out to the populations that depended on us?" Having communication technology such as landlines and redundant systems, being able to connect with affected communities quickly, and participating in Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) were stressed as critical. VOAD is a nationally network of agencies that work together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. In one case, the local VOAD created call centers so stakeholders could reach their constituents. Providers mentioned the benefits of VOAD conference calls, which connected them to government, national disaster agencies, and local agencies involved with the crisis. VOADs also help in sharing information, making plans, and distributing resources throughout the lifecycle of the disaster.

5. Ensure Local Funding

Post-disaster funding for community-based organizations (CBOs) and nonprofits was a concern raised by all interviewees. Some noted that although CBOs are critical in the primary response, large national disaster organizations such as the Red Cross get most donations, leaving the CBOs starved for resources. To prevent this mismatch, providers all recommended pre-established

"Your service sector will not get funded."

KATRINA FOOD PROVIDER

agreements and funding mechanisms for CBOs. They stressed the importance of CBOs getting involved in advocacy and disaster policy planning to ensure they get funded.

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH SAN FRANCISCO STAKEHOLDERS

GREATEST FEARS

Asked to identify their biggest fears regarding emergency food systems, Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy stakeholders most frequently cited violence due to food scarcity. Not getting food to disadvantaged, already needy people, risks further marginalizing them. Fear of chaos resulting from an uncoordinated response and lack of cooperation also was mentioned. Another salient fear was that big government resources might “roll in” and dictate response and recovery that doesn’t match the needs or best interests of the community. Stakeholders working with homebound seniors and other very vulnerable populations worried about clients dying from avoidable circumstances, such as not having food and water. Other fears included large surges in the demand for services by new populations; a lack of someone looking at the “whole system”; loss of entire neighborhoods; insufficient staffing; inaccessible food sources; and poor decision-making during the crisis.

“My greatest fear is there is not enough to cover the need—everybody will be clamoring for stuff (leading) ultimately to civil unrest.”

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWEE

GAPS

Stakeholders were asked to identify the key gaps and issues in the entire food system (pre-placement, pipeline, logistics, distribution) that they anticipate in a disaster. These themes emerged: lack of resources and capabilities at the CBO level, the lack of planning, and system-level failures in distribution, coordination, and communication.

“The food thing is not worked out—it’s just not happening.”

DISASTER PLANNER

CBOs recognize their own lack of adequate staffing, food, storage, systems for managing people, and communication; lack of institutionalized knowledge, expertise, convening, and coordination; their failure to make disaster planning an agency priority; and lack of inter-agency coordination, so that each agency does its own thing. CBOs also point to system-level issues such as transportation and giving clients passes or IDs to get food, and to

the populations themselves who are not prepared or thinking about disasters.

The food supplies themselves were a concern. Food providers noted that many food pantries have replaced the traditional canned goods with fresh produce, reducing the supply of emergency food on hand and increasing the need for cold storage and backup power systems for storage. Further, vulnerable populations often have specific nutritional requirements (diabetic-friendly, low-salt, culturally relevant) that don't align with typical emergency food such as MREs.

Disaster planners also cited the lack of an integrated feeding plan and of coordinated logistics and distribution systems. Food planning was “a weird carve out,” said one planner, grouped with sheltering instead of being its own entity. “Food in a disaster is super important but tangential to (planner’s) primary missions—that’s why it’s so hard to get attention,” another planner commented.

Other critical needs included:

- Points of distribution (PODs) identified in neighborhoods
- Food storage caches and more storage space in the city
- Face-to-face relationships between neighborhoods
- Clarity about funding and reimbursements
- Planning integration with key stakeholders
- Central coordination
- Coordination with the Food Bank
- Community participation/representation in planning (for example at POD workgroups and VOAD)
- Supplies in the city (fuel, food, water)
- Someone with a full understanding of San Francisco’s unique food system involved in the planning

IMPROVING THE DISASTER FOOD SYSTEM

Based on lessons learned from past disasters, literature review of effective disaster strategies, and feedback from key stakeholders in San Francisco, this report recommends the following actions to improve San Francisco’s disaster food system: 1) fund community (ground-level) disaster representation; 2) support collaboration and pre-planning; 3) conduct assessments, drills, and tabletop exercises; 4) improve communication systems; 5) expand supply of pre-placed food and water; 6) engage the private and corporate sector; and 7) expand neighborhood-based community-preparedness efforts.

1. Fund Community Disaster Representation

All feedback and disaster-planning literature confirm that disasters affect different locales differently, so planning must include representatives from various ground-level organizations to be effective. However, these nonprofits are inundated with their daily work and have little expertise in dealing with disasters and no funding to acquire it. This is a key vulnerability. City disaster planners and national nonprofits struggle to get the right players to the table but rarely include the local organizations. While many resources support disaster-planning efforts in San Francisco, CBOs on the ground are the least funded and yet the most relied-upon to assist their communities after a disaster. They should be trained to play key coordination and communication roles during all phases of response and recovery. As one Sandy food provider notes, “If I wasn’t as prepared as I could have been—if I didn’t have the opportunity to even think ahead of time of how to create the space and some extra capacity, then the problem just gets compounded in a disaster.”

“If you are funding me at the disaster and only at the disaster, you are barely doing anything.”

SUPERSTORM SANDY
FOOD PROVIDER

2. Support Collaboration and Pre-Planning

Collaboration and pre-planning were top priorities for everyone interviewed for this report. Pre-planning is especially important for neighborhoods with high levels of food-insecure individuals and families (such as the Tenderloin, South of Market, Bayview, and Chinatown). “When a disaster hits,” one planner said, “there is no time to learn—you need relationships, practice, and working in advance because that is what is needed in the field.” Pre-planning creates common understanding and mitigates the “one-size-fits-all” response that may not meet the community’s needs. While local governments are interested in developing a

disaster feeding plan, CBOs and intermediaries such as SF CARD should be at the table representing community needs. Bringing government and community groups together around food planning is critical.

Significant government food resources will become available in the days and weeks following a disaster, including a disaster CalFresh (food stamp) system. Educating local food providers and CBOs about these government systems will help ensure a cohesive response after the initial 72 hours.

3. Conduct Assessments, Tabletop Exercises, and Drills

Disasters are localized, affecting neighborhoods differently. To create effective plans, assessments are needed to determine where vulnerable populations live, identify areas with limited food resources, and pinpoint other disaster concerns. Including representatives from low-income and vulnerable communities in tabletop exercises, which are facilitated group discussions of a simulated emergency scenario in an informal setting, was identified as a vital tool. In our survey, stakeholders at all levels indicated the importance of practicing together and conducting drills. Drills enable planners to identify shortcomings, correct deficiencies in operations and planning (SPUR, 2008), and engage communities in preparedness efforts. An example of an effective exercise cited by local planners was one conducted by the Tenderloin Hunger Task Force in May 2013. Its Disaster Feed SF exercise convened the city's major hunger charities for their first joint disaster-planning event. Simulating the aftermath of a 7.8 earthquake, agencies served approximately 4,000 hot meals to residents of the Tenderloin without using electricity.

4. Improve Communication Systems

During a disaster, communication is vital. Specifically cited as important were having land-lines and redundant communications systems, being able to connect with affected communities, and participating in VOADs. The Tenderloin Hunger Task Force organized mutual-assistance agreements between nonprofits and the city, including a requirement that in an emergency, food providers share their situation with each other. These systems can be expanded and replicated city-wide.

5. Expand Supplies of Pre-placed Food and Water

In the first 72 hours following a disaster, people who have access to food and water have fewer fears about scarcity and are less likely to behave violently. The access also can be life-saving for people with special needs. Home-bound seniors, those with severe medical needs, and families with very young children require immediate assistance. In San Francisco, Meals on Wheels and Project Open Hand deliver 1.6 million meals each year to residents who are isolated and often frail or

in poor health. Given that meal deliveries are likely be disrupted, these individuals will be cut off from food and potable water. Shelf-stable meals could be pre-delivered to these programs' clients, ensuring access to food immediately following a disaster. People who are mobile can get to neighborhood centers and places of worship for assistance, so these institutions also should have access to stored food and water. Pre-placed home-delivered meals, emergency food and water caches in neighborhoods, and encouraging low-income populations to do their own basic pre-planning by stocking food, water, and medications are essential.

6. Engage the Private and Corporate Sector

“At any time, there is plenty of food in San Francisco, but how do we access it?” asked a city disaster planner. Businesses and corporations have the logistics and resources to quickly access and deliver food, yet the private sector is mostly absent in city and neighborhood disaster planning. Engaging local, national, and multinational corporations will help galvanize response. Food banks, whose core business operations involve managing and redistributing large-scale donations, are a natural link to the private sector. Agencies that bridge corporate connections such as the California Resilience Alliance and the S.F. Department of Emergency Management should be involved in local planning efforts.

7. Expand Neighborhood Community Preparedness Efforts

Low-income and vulnerable individuals are most at risk in a disaster and require personal preparedness. A culture of preparedness helps mitigate the consequences of a disaster and creates more resilient communities. Successful programs through the Neighborhood Empowerment Network already exist to educate low-income and vulnerable communities on personal preparedness in neighborhoods such as Diamond Heights and Bayview, but these efforts are not yet citywide and do not address the specific needs of food-insecure and vulnerable individuals. Expanding this work to other vulnerable neighborhoods and integrating them in a disaster feeding plan is important.

Funding experienced staff positions at the S.F. Food Bank and SF CARD to work with neighborhood agencies, initiate needs assessments, participate in citywide emergency feeding planning, coordinate or participate in tabletop exercises and drills, and advocate for funding and reimbursement agreements is recommended. See the figure below which outlines the steps needed to strengthen the disaster food system.

STRENGTHENING THE DISASTER FOOD SYSTEM



CBOs cite the need for better emergency communication systems, more pre-placed food and water, and better storage and refrigeration. Citywide food providers also need better transportation and authorized access to deliver to affected areas. Finally, existing community-preparedness efforts rarely target low-income and vulnerable communities. Funding diverse preparedness efforts will advance neighborhood resiliency.

PHILANTHROPIC OPPORTUNITIES

Vulnerable populations—particularly seniors, the disabled, and low-income families with young children—depend on food assistance to meet their nutritional needs. The agencies and community organizations that regularly feed vulnerable individuals have made progress in their agency disaster planning but are severely underfunded.

Of particular concern is the lack of funding for emergency food coordination at the SF-Marin Food Bank. It serves more than 96,000 individuals through its 200 San Francisco pantries. It also supplies free fresh produce and low-cost food to the city's 16 free dining rooms. The Tenderloin Hunger Task Force's eight agencies include the five largest feeding organizations in the city, three of them with a citywide scope; this task force also could play a critical role in disaster food planning but has no disaster funding and lacks expertise.

Planning mitigates the potential for the violence and trauma that can follow food and water scarcity after a major disaster. A Katrina food provider directly equated the fear and lawlessness in her community with scarcity, lack of planning, communication, and organization. Only when the National Guard stepped in and distributed food was order re-established, but, by then, communities already were damaged, and residents were criminalized for caring for their families. "Stealing diapers and bread became a shootable offense," she lamented.

All of the literature about emergency planning best practices cites having community stakeholders at the table with local, state, and federal planners as the key to a successful disaster plan. Still, CBOs here have no funding to participate. In a successful model used by the Seattle and King County Department of Public Health, agencies came together to develop plans for reaching their vulnerable clients during an emergency. CBOs helped create those plans and applied for small grants to increase their resiliency. While this

model was used in the public health sector, a similar structure could be used to develop feeding plans for vulnerable populations in San Francisco.

FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Four specific funding recommendations are outlined below. These could fill gaps in the San Francisco Disaster Food System and ensure that vulnerable residents will not be left out in the event of a disaster.

| INTERVENTION | KEY ELEMENTS | ESTIMATED COST |
|--|--|--------------------|
| 1) Fund a Disaster Food Manager for the SF-Marin Food Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time position • Administrative costs • Program costs include training • Enhanced communications, infrastructure • 3 years | \$345,000 |
| 2) Fund 75,000 pre-placed meals for vulnerable individuals and families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-placed disaster kits (two days food and water) such as those distributed by Meals on Wheels • Other pre-placed meals (MREs, heater meals, etc.) in targeted neighborhoods | \$525,000 |
| 3) Fund a CBO-based Feeding Plan Coordinator through SF CARD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time position • Administrative costs • Program costs include convenings, trainings, publications, and events • 3 years | \$330,000 |
| 4) Fund targeted CBOs to participate in disaster planning, training, and preparedness, and improve their agency’s resiliency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund staffing and training time (\$5,000-\$10,000 per year) for 10 key agencies that feed vulnerable populations including Meals on Wheels, Project Open Hand, St. Anthony Foundation, Glide, and Providence Foundation • Fund staffing time for coalitions: NICOS and Tenderloin Hunger Task Force. • 3 years | \$300,000 |
| | Total | \$1,500,000 |

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END NOTES

¹ Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey (2012: 1 year IPUMS sample), Brookings Institution 2014

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³ SPUR Report (August 1, 2004). “Earthquakes: San Francisco at Risk.” *The Urbanist Magazine*. Retrieved 4/14/14 from <http://www.spur.org/publications/article/2004-08-01/earthquakes-san-francisco-risk>

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