## Unit 2: Collaboration and Partnership

### Introduction
During this unit, we will focus on the benefits and challenges of collaboration, as well as the responsibilities of the players involved in volunteer and donations management.

### Objectives
At the conclusion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Describe the benefits and challenges of collaboration.
2. List organizations that collaborate on volunteer and donations management.
3. Explain the composition and operations of a Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT).

### Scope
- Interagency Collaboration
- Organizations and Individuals
- Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT)

### Methodology
- Interactive discussion
- Small group activity

### References/Handouts
When Disaster Strikes...How to Donate or Volunteer Successfully. L217, August 2007.
Neither chiefs of response organizations nor emergency managers have the right to tell a voluntary organization what to do during any emergency management functions. That is why you need to develop effective relationships with representatives of voluntary agencies before an emergency in your area.
**Interagency Collaboration**

Collaboration is built on the foundations of cooperation, communication, and coordination.

In fact, the guiding principles of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (National VOAD) are the 4 Cs.

1. Cooperation
2. Communication
3. Coordination
4. Collaboration

They are listed in that order (easiest to most difficult) because it references how member organizations grow in their working relationship with each other, but also with government and private-sector organizations.
**Breaking the Barriers**

### Purpose:
To develop solutions to several common barriers limiting organizations from building successful collaborative relationships.

### Directions:
1. Working with other members in your table group, discuss the potential barrier assigned.
   - Determine whether it is applicable to organizations in your area.
   - If so, develop as many solutions as possible.
   - If it is not applicable, explore whether organizations in your area face additional potential barriers.

2. Prepare an easel chart with the key points from your discussion and be ready to give a brief report to the rest of the class.
• We want people to see the effort in working together will pay off and that there are benefits in doing so.

**Organizations and Individuals**

Several key individuals become involved in managing unsolicited donations and unaffiliated volunteers. They may be part of the Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT), which we will discuss next.
- Local, Tribal, or State Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD): Collaborates within the VDCT because VOAD members are the receiving agencies for volunteers and donations in disaster.

- Local, Tribal, or State Emergency Management Agency (EMA): Typically, the Public Information Officer (PIO) is the EMA representative. The PIO will receive information from VDCT and develop it for public delivery or assist a representative from the VDCT with message development and delivery.

- State Volunteer and Donations Coordinator: From EMA or other State agency. The key player for establishing/instituting the Volunteer and Donations Management Program.

- Other local, tribal, or State agencies.

- Warehouse Manager: The individual responsible for managing daily activities at the warehouse, who is tasked by the organization responsible for the warehouse.

- Call Center Manager: The individual designated to manage the phone bank, call center, or Website; implementing and updating scripts; identifying and training call-takers, etc.

Each State is required to have a Volunteer and Donations Coordinator who:

- Collaborates with a local VOAD point of contact, but might not be the lead VOAD point of contact.

- Coordinates the management of unsolicited goods and unaffiliated volunteers.
Business and industry leaders may be able to fill a certain need, such as:
- Medicines
- Discounts on goods

The media may communicate your organization's needs and phone bank numbers, and should be involved in planning before the incident to educate them on your organization.

Labor organizations can provide:
- Transportation
- Specialized volunteers

Labor can be found through civic associations such as:
- Rotary clubs and other civic groups, e.g., Lions, Moose, Elk
- Kiwanis
- Animal-related organizations, e.g., Humane Society
• Churches, synagogues, mosques, and interfaith groups may provide:
  – Volunteers
  – Counseling
  – Showers
  – Short-term emergency housing

• Community-based organizations may be smaller groups not associated with national or State VOADs, but they have resources and need to be a part of your plan.

**Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT)**

What is a Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT)?

An organized team of government, private voluntary organizations, and the private sector that has a vested interest in all aspects of managing unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donations.

• A VDCT is the group of collaborative partners involved in volunteer and donations management during a disaster. It brings resources to the table and represents volunteer groups in the response and recovery functions.

• You may need or want separate teams for volunteer management and donations management.
  – Use whatever works well for your area.
Functions of the VDCT include:

- Donations intelligence (where donations are being dropped off, what is coming in, etc.)
- Reporting requirements
- Participation in daily communications
- Liaison with other government agencies
- Managing the phone bank
- Coordination of media (social media, press releases, Public Service Announcements [PSAs], Website updates)
- Coordination of offers; look at the offers and decide if they are to be accepted, declined, or referred to an organization.
Local Volunteer and Donations Coordinator Responsibilities

- Activate the annex
- Manage the VDCT
- Determine support needed from other agencies/organizations
- Coordinate with local government and emergency officials
- Manage the call center
- Coordinate field logistics

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Visual 2.11

- Coordinate media releases to set realistic public expectations
- Coordinate the flow of unsolicited goods, spontaneous volunteers, and undesignated cash
- Maintain a link with local or tribal EOC
- Delegate responsibilities as necessary
- Ensure a smooth transition from response to recovery
The following is a list of responsibilities of the State Volunteer and Donations Coordinator. Depending on the size and complexity of the disaster, not all of these responsibilities will be needed.

- The Volunteer and Donations Annex is part of the county or city's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The responsibilities of the Local Volunteer and Donations Coordinator are overseeing, writing, exercising, updating, and activating the Annex.

- Provide leadership of VDCT and manage potential issues of interpersonal dynamics (e.g., morale, mental health, conflict, scheduling).

- In conjunction with PIO, as appropriate, generate press releases, PSAs, Website updates, Twitter feeds, blogs, etc.

- Know where media releases should be sent.
  - Work with the local and State Public Information Office to ensure coordinated and accurate messages and information as the situation evolves.

- Delegate someone with the authority to coordinate the management and flow of unsolicited goods and spontaneous volunteers.
  - Make sure to communicate if this person changes.
  - Management of goods, volunteers, and cash requires different sets of skills.
  - The VDCT coordinates this management during disaster operations.

- Maintain an accurate and timely communication link with the local or tribal EOC and, if necessary, with the State EOC.
  - Establish mile-markers in the planning stages as indicators of the transition from response to recovery.
The VDCC serves as the central location for the VDCT, and possibly the phone bank.

The VDCC must have direct communication/contact with the EOC if not located in the same facility.

The VDCC does not receive goods or volunteers.

It is the central meeting place for the command team.

The number of phone lines required will depend on the size of your community.

If possible, reserve at least one or two unpublished lines for outgoing calls, as published numbers may quickly be overwhelmed.
What’s In Your Annex?

Visual 2.13

What’s In Your Annex?

Does your annex:
- List the primary and supporting agencies and organizations?
- Describe the members of the VDCT?
- List the responsibilities of the VDCT?

Unit Summary

Visual 2.14

Summary

1. Describe the benefits and challenges of collaboration.
2. List organizations that collaborate on volunteer and donations management.
3. Explain the composition and operations of a Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT).
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Organization Chart for a VDCT ......................................................... 2-16
Sample
Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team
Emergency Support Function #____
Volunteer and Donations Management Program

ICS – Operations Section/Human Services Branch