PROJECT IMPACT: PROGRESS AND PROGRAM ISSUES

SELECTED FINDINGS FROM THE DISASTER RESEARCH CENTER'S PROJECT IMPACT EVALUATION

KATHLEEN TIERNEY

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TOPICS FOR PRESENTATION

- DESCRIPTION OF DRC'S RESEARCH ACTIVITIES
- MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS
- WHAT DRC HAS LEARNED
  - PI PROGRESS
  - FACTORS AFFECTING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS
- GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

DRC'S PROJECT IMPACT RESEARCH

- **BEGAN IN FALL 1997**
- **INITIAL FOCUS: 7 PI PILOT SITES**
  - BASELINE STUDY (1998)
  - ANNUAL FOLLOW-UPS (1999, 2000)
- **BROADER IMPLEMENTATION PHASE:**
  - FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (1998, 1999, 2000)
  - SITE VISITS IN TEN PI COMMUNITIES NATIONWIDE (2000)
- **TYPES OF DATA USED**
  - INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS (FACE-TO-FACE AND TELEPHONE)
  - FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS
  - EXTENSIVE DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS

RESEARCH TOPICS:
COMMUNITY STUDIES

- Status of program activities in the areas of mitigation, partnerships, public education, and program management

- Partnership arrangements and strategies

- The ways in which recent disaster experiences and local political and economic changes affect PI implementation

- The nature and extent of leveraging activities

- Strategies communities use to build and maintain momentum

- Lessons communities have learned that have applicability for wider program implementation efforts

FOCUS GROUPS

- Getting started and sustaining momentum
- Expanding PI more broadly
- How partnerships develop and evolve
- Transition from public education and preparedness to mitigation
- What communities need from FEMA to make their efforts more effective

DRC REPORTS ON PI

- Executive Summary: Disaster Resistant Communities Initiative: Evaluation of the Pilot Phase, Year 1 (1998)

- Executive Summary: Disaster Resistant Communities Initiative: Evaluation if the Pilot Phase, Year 2 (2000)

- Disaster Resistant Communities Initiative: Evaluation of the Pilot Phase, Year 2 (2000) (Full Report)

- Disaster Resistant Communities Initiative: Focus Group Analysis (2000)

- Available on the Web at http://www.udel.edu/DRC

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- PROJECT IMPACT *IS* HAVING AN IMPACT
  - Growth in federal, state, and especially local partnerships
  - Expansion of hazard assessment and mitigation activities

- CHANGES ON SCALE DRC HAS DOCUMENTED WOULD NOT BE OCCURRING WITHOUT PI

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN DRC'S EVALUATION STUDIES

- Getting Established And Overcoming The "Liability Of Newness"
- Vulnerability Of Pi Activities To Local Political And Economic Climate
- Influence Of Local Political Setting: Conflicts, Disputes Over Control, Pre-existing Divisions

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

- **PIVOTAL ROLE OF PI COORDINATOR**
  - FULL-TIME EFFORT
  - CRUCIAL FOR SUSTAINING MOMENTUM
  - CLOSE TO CENTERS OF DECISION MAKING
  - OUTWARDLY FOCUSED ON BUILDING BROAD COMMUNITY CAPACITY

- **SUSTAINING ACTIVITIES WHEN DISASTERS DON'T OCCUR**

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

- Federal Goals And Objectives Versus Local Community Control
- Intergovernmental Communication And Coordination
- Rapid Expenditures Of Funds Versus More Careful Long-term Planning
- Local Need For Information On Nationwide PI Activities
- Concern About PI Beyond The Current Administration

PROJECT IMPACT AS A SOCIAL CHANGE AGENT

OVERALL GOALS:

- REDUCING LONG TERM LOSSES
  - DEATHS
  - INJURIES
  - SOCIAL DISRUPTION
  - ECONOMIC LOSSES

- BRINGING ABOUT MAJOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES
  - CHANGES IN VALUES, ATTITUDES
  - FOCUS ON COMMUNITY WIDE PREVENTION AND SUSTAINABILITY