

Criteria for Inclusion on a Disaster NGO Recommendation List (External)

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This document outlines the criteria for building relationships with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and researching their suitability for inclusion as a recommendation on curated lists of responding NGOs given to Center for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP) clients/donors during catastrophic disasters. This work is currently carried out by Tanya Gulliver-Garcia, assistant director of major initiatives with support from Regine A. Webster, vice president and other staff. The primary focus is on U.S.-based 501c3 organizations, although due to client needs/interests, organizations in other countries may be considered.

Center for Disaster Philanthropy's Mission and Vision

Mission

Leverage the power of philanthropy to mobilize a full range of resources that strengthen the ability of communities to withstand disasters and recover equitably when they occur.

Vision

A world where the impact of disasters is minimized by thoughtful, equitable and responsible recovery for all.

Process – Blue Sky

1) Relationship Building with NGOs

During the blue sky (i.e. non-disaster) times staff will build familiarity with both domestic and international NGOs. This will occur through conference attendance/presentations, phone and in-person meetings, mailing lists and personal communication.

2) Evaluation of NGOs

Staff will also research NGOs on a variety of charitable platforms. Ratings on various assessment tools will be explored and documented. Previous CDP experience with the NGO as a grantee will also be analyzed. Staff will also carry out CDP Pre-Check, a tool used to conduct due diligence. As part of Pre-Check, CDP works to understand each organization's mission, programs, governance structure and financial stability. This information is entered into CDP's database – Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge – to assist in retrieving information and making recommendations during disasters.

3) Relationship Building with Clients

At the same time, staff will communicate with [clients](#) through monthly emails and quarterly online meetings. Each client's requirements for NGO recommendations will be assessed and taken into account when building a Disaster NGO Recommendation List.

Process – During a Disaster

During a disaster, CDP commits to providing at least three lists to its clients, although sometimes more lists are prepared. These lists are sent to clients 24-48 hours after a disaster occurs, one week and one month post-disaster. These lists, especially the first two, are developed very quickly. The evaluative work and relationships carried out during blue sky times is integral to providing high-quality, curated lists for our clients within the required timeframes.

First List – Prepared 24 to 48 Hours After a Disaster

This list may be prepared even earlier when there is advance warning/notice about a disaster (e.g. for a hurricane there may be a pre- and post-landfall lists.) NGOs added to this list are ones the staff is most familiar with, who meet client criteria **and** have notified CDP that they are assessing/responding. If CDP does not have prior knowledge of an organization, it will not be included on this list. When possible, CDP will check in with NVOAD and/or InterAction to determine who of their membership is responding.

At this stage the list includes relief, early recovery and long-term recovery organizations, but always with a focus to the long-term. NGOs responding at this stage could be engaged in a variety of tasks including, but not limited to feeding, sheltering, WASH, muck/gut, debris removal/waste management, logistics, power, medical response, mental health care, children's services, transportation etc. They will be providing these on emergency/crisis level only, although they may be planning for a longer-term response. This list may also include organizations that would like to respond but need to secure funding to be able to do so.

Second List – Prepared One Week After a Disaster

CDP carries out more extensive research to determine which organizations are responding. This includes direct communication with an NGO, checking websites and other databases and published lists from foundations/media, checking-in with other NGOs, InterAction list/check-in, local/state VOAD list/calls, National VOAD check-in etc. Organizations that are added generally are a past grantee of CDP and/or have gone through CDP Pre-Check and/or have high ratings on databases and/or are a newer organization meeting needs of vulnerable populations. Again, they are also organizations that have notified staff, who then verify that they are responding. More intensive research into funds/foundation response is also done during this time.

This list is focused on early and long-term recovery organizations. At this point, organizations may still be conducting assessments, but there is an expectation that there is some activity taking place on the ground – unless prohibited by the nature of the disaster – and/or clear plans in place. The activities are mostly the same, however the staff will be starting to look at those organizations that are moving towards a longer-term response.

Third List – Prepared One Month After a Disaster

CDP carries out more in-depth research with a focus on identifying organizations that will be on-the-ground for the next three months at least, preferably one year or longer.

Long-term recovery is the primary focus. At this stage, organizations should have moved beyond the assessment phase to either implementing their activities or having clear plans in place, including start dates. For example, some disasters may require debris management/soil remediation activities before home rebuilding can start. Emergency relief organizations or those providing activities such as

sheltering, feeding etc. will not be included on this final list unless there is a unique reason as to why that is required in this disaster.

Notes on Client Requirements

- As some clients want a long, vetted list of organizations responding while others only want 3-5 or 5-10 recommendations not all NGOs will make each client's list. All clients are sent the full list of responding organizations and have the ability to add or change the list to meet their specific requirements.
- Lists will be responsive to client preferences. They may include organizations specific clients consider mandatory, or on the flipside, not include non-preferred organizations (e.g. certain religious organizations, organizations that discriminate in hiring).
- Efforts will be made to reduce duplication on lists to avoid being a "king-maker" to one organization. However, this will not always be possible, as the staff tries to include organizations from different response areas; limitations on who is doing what may hinder variety. For example, if only one organization is responding in a specific sector – health, shelter -- they may be duplicated across multiple clients. This is particularly true in international disasters where only a few NGOs may be responding in a certain country.
- If CDP has a Fund for that disaster, the list includes its own Fund **IF** allowed by clients. Some clients may choose to only recommend CDP's Fund while others prefer not to include it at all.

Tips for NGOs/Foundations/Funds

- Add CDP staff to your mailing list – both formal newsletters and "staying in touch" updates.
- Communicate directly with [Tanya Gulliver-Garcia, assistant director of major initiatives](#), as soon as you know your organization will be responding to a disaster (or sending an assessment team). This can be a text or quick email; it does not need to be a formal communication. **Failure to notify us will result in omission from the list.** We understand that it is a busy time for your organization which is why a text or quick email is acceptable. Please note: it is not the responsibility of the CDP staff to seek out this information.
- Keep CDP updated on your activities as they transition from assessment to response. Staff will look at websites and reach out whenever possible but also need you to be proactive.
- In blue sky times, you are encouraged to connect with Tanya to build familiarity with you and your organization.
- Make sure your profiles are updated on Guidestar, Charity Navigator etc. and if you have a low rating, examine what needs to be done to increase your ratings.
- Be prepared to do a quick turnaround on due diligence for CDP Pre-Check. If you have already completed Pre-Check, respond to requests for updated financials/other materials.
- If you are a CDP grantee, stay current on your reporting deadlines and maintain communication with your fund director.

Criteria for Inclusion on a CDP Disaster NGO Recommendations List

- 1) **CDP Criteria for Recommending NGOs.** Recommendations will be made on a case-by-case basis and will take into account a number of criteria. CDP will examine and record in its database, NGO ratings from a variety of assessments.
- 2) Other factors to be examined:
 - a. Pre-existing presence in area of disaster. If NGO is new to that area, must explain why they have chosen to deploy there, have tangible indications of partnerships with local organizations etc.

- b. NGO should have knowledge of local area, needs, culture, language etc.
- c. NGO cannot proselytize in exchange for services. An NGO may be faith-based but all disasters services should be free of religious requirements.
- d. Services are available to all who meet eligibility requirements, while understanding that a particular population may be prioritized (e.g. focus on seniors, services for children only).
- e. If NGO is/has been a CDP grantee, confirmation that work was carried out according to agreements, including no overdue reports, conflicts etc.
- f. Preference for organizations with a strong commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI).
- g. Organization has an understanding of recovery functions and needs. Ideally, organization is intending to carry out recovery activities.
- h. Majority of donations are directed to program work/low overhead costs. If regranteeing, minimal costs in transferring funds to responding organizations.
- i. Commitment to use donations for a specific disaster solely to respond to that disaster.

Conclusion

While CDP does fundraise during certain disasters and provides grants in the mid- and long-term recovery stage, our work making recommendations is equally vital to resolving disasters for impacted communities. Our curated lists are a key component of meeting our vision and mission.

Open communication among ourselves, clients and NGOs is encouraged. Please reach out if you have any questions.