

Communicating with Organisations Providing Services in Times of Disaster

Preparing Somali food for disaster personnel. Fairfax Media.



Advice for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

New Zealand's population is growing more and more culturally diverse. In times of disaster, CALD communities have enormous capacity to respond.

- Be prepared for disaster
- Connect with the wider community
- Get to know people in key Government departments and the Christchurch City Council

All these things will help your community get the support you need following disaster. Your community will also feel more connected with the things that happen to rebuild the community after disaster.

There are some things that will help your community let Government and support agencies know what you need following disaster. There are also ways you can support each other better at this time.

» **Develop strong leadership**

- Leaders need to support their community and make sure others are doing this too. Leaders need to ask for help to grow in this role, and take part in opportunities available to learn to be more effective as a leader.

» **Reach out to local communities and engage with them**

- Invite neighbours and friends to cultural celebrations and get to know the people who live near you. These connections are helpful when disaster occurs.

» **Develop resiliency and preparedness**

- Get the community prepared by talking about emergency planning and offering practical help to community members as they prepare disaster kits.
- Consider supporting a community member to have a civil defence role within the community – someone who can learn about disaster management and pass this information on to the community. This person can be a key contact alongside the community leader, supporting them in times of disaster.
- Promote people's right to an interpreter when dealing with government agencies, and help CALD community members to be able to request this service.

» **Know who your vulnerable members are and have a plan in place to ensure they are supported**

» **Work in with Government agencies**

- Let agencies know what you expect so they can adjust the way they work with each community.
- Invite key agencies to base a worker at CALD community hubs.
- Let agencies know how they can best get information to members of your CALD community.
- Make sure your community's information is included in CALD emergency databases and update this regularly.
- Let agencies know about the good things you are doing to communicate, connect with and support your own community following disaster - own language websites, phone trees/chains, radio shows and stations, other media etc.

These guidelines are another project by the Community Language Information Network Group (CLING) in Christchurch.

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