

Results from Panel 4 Small Group Discussion

Question 1: What are the ideas from the panel that resonate most in your small group?

Preparation

- Contingency plans must be developed and tested
- “Preparedness” must go to the neighborhood level –neighborhoods must be linked to local emergency response plans
- Local knowledge must be integrated with/included in systematic government responses
- Mechanisms to ensure volunteers and citizens can participate effectively must be established ahead of time

Coordination

- Cooperation among government agencies to respond with an integrated approach
- Coordination of public sector and volunteer responders – clear allocation of roles and responsibilities
- Response must be comprehensive (include all sectors) as well as transparent and accessible

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Communication and Training



- Disaster response plans must be validated through major exercises that involve government agencies and citizens -- coordination through an established framework
- Relationships must be redefined so that success is measured by outcomes NOT “who is in charge“
- Citizenry must be equipped with basic disaster response skills as well as mental and physical (supplies) preparedness

Cycle of Attention / Sustainability



- Continued efforts to maintain public interest through regular updates -- (for example, interest in the tsunami region has waned)
- Developing (as part of emergency response planning) a long-term vision for relief and recovery
- Sustained response via international NGOs, after media attention has waned

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Other Comments and Observations



- Emergency situations are a defining moment for a government – a “trial by fire” that leads to a positive or negative perception
- Leadership is key:
 - Roles must be clarified
 - Vision must be communicated
 - “Openness” to unconventional approaches that involve a wide range of stakeholders
- Media has a role: shaping the response and conveying a strong and uniting message

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Question 2: *What other promising approaches in this area deserve attention?*

Leadership & Accountability



- Institutional accountability at the state and non-state levels
- Proper accounting of impact including non-monetary measures; transparency data collection and use
- ***Leadership training***

Community Involvement



- Empowering communities and building relationships with gov't (e.g. service on boards)
- Training, engaging citizens
- Managing influx of volunteers

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Question 2: What other promising approaches in this area deserve attention?

Integration



- Define roles and responsibilities across agencies & levels of gov't
- Include private entities & NGO's
- Remember "caretaker cities" (bordering communities can easily be overwhelmed)
- Build international coalitions

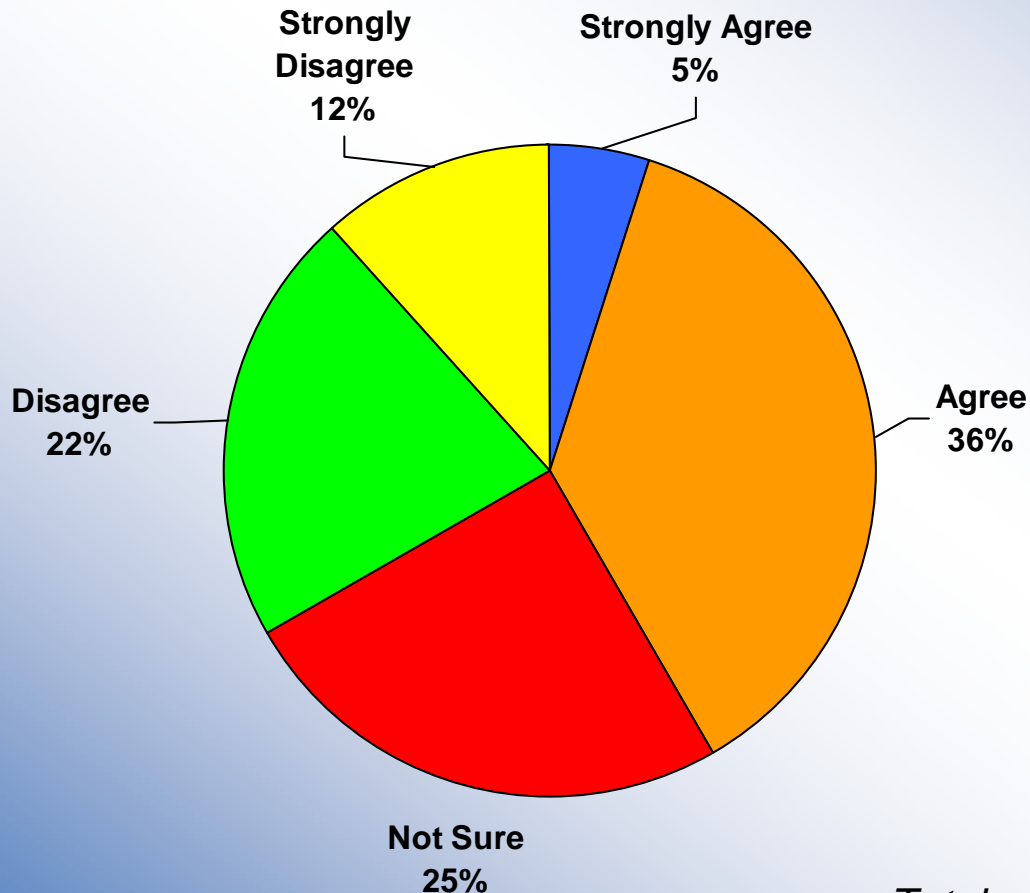
Relief & Recovery



- Impact of relief on local economy
- Accessing federal assistance
- Long-term mental and emotional consequences and associated rehabilitation processes

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Question 3: Do you think your local government, backed up by higher levels of government, is adequately prepared to deal with catastrophic events?



Total number of responses: 120