

Neighborhood Emergency Networks in Corvallis, Oregon and Uzhhorod, Ukraine

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Gender Equality and Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop
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I'd like to talk briefly about two community preparedness projects – one in the U.S. and one in Ukraine.

In the mid-1990s individuals and groups involved with emergency management in Linn and Benton counties in Oregon became concerned that the city and county resources were not adequate to care for everyone who could be affected by a major earthquake. A number of groups began to meet quarterly to identify emergency needs and resources. The Linn-Benton Emergency Training (or LB NET) was developed in collaboration with LuAn Johnson, based on similar projects she had implemented in the San Francisco Bay area and Seattle. The programs help neighborhoods organize to be self-sufficient for a period of at least 72-hours immediately following a major earthquake or other emergency.

The LB NET project: (*slide 2*)

- Has a paid coordinator and each participating neighborhood has one volunteer to organize and host the meetings.
- Training is done by the project coordinator or a trained volunteer who makes presentations to neighborhood groups. At the request of a neighborhood, arrangements can be made for other training, such as first aid and CPR.
- LB NET funded through the counties, using county funds and other money donated or raised specifically for the project.
- Most neighborhoods are made up of single-family homes. At present, no neighborhood includes apartment buildings.

(*slide 3*) The initial neighborhood meeting is typically attended by five to 25 people. The trainer gives an overview of the local hazards and the reasons behind the need for self-sufficiency for a 72-hour period. Each attendee is given a booklet that outlines the program, identifies roles and responsibilities for the group, and provides family preparedness tips.

An additional five meetings are held approximately every six months and provide organized opportunities for families, neighborhood teams and the neighborhood as a whole to consider their response to events, and discuss and practice scenarios.

Between the organized neighborhood meetings, the response teams meet to identify issues and plan their response. For example, the Sheltering and Special Needs team would identify those

with special needs, as well as likely locations for sheltering people whose homes are not habitable.

(slide 4) I was the associate director of a one-year project in Uzhhorod, Ukraine to increase neighborhood preparedness and develop women leaders. The Women's Neighborhood Networking Project was modeled on the LB NET in Oregon and funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

(slide 5) Ukraine was a founding member of the USSR in 1922, and was used by Lenin as a testing ground for his ideas on Soviet restructuring and methods of stamping out nationalist groups he considered harmful.

As a result of nearly 70 years in the Soviet Union, there is a tendency for Ukrainians to trust neither the government nor their neighbors. For example, in an economy of scarce resources and long lines to purchase even staple foods, it was not uncommon for individuals to protect knowledge about availability rather than share that information with their neighbors.

The project began in November 2000, when U.S. project members traveled to Uzhhorod to conduct interviews and select 14 women as project participants and alternates. They ranged in age from 20 to 74. All the participants, alternates and the two part-time Ukrainian coordinators met for a one-day training that included the philosophy of rapid assessment, and interview and observation skills helpful in conducting a neighborhood needs assessment.

In a brainstorming exercise the participants developed five questions to ask their neighbors. Over the next several days, they worked in teams of two or three to interview their neighbors about their knowledge of and preparedness for natural and human-caused disasters. Each participant conducted two interviews with a U.S. team member as note-taker, observer and coach for interview techniques. The information collected was used in the rapid assessment process to determine local knowledge and to identify training needs for the participants' visit to the U.S. the following spring.

In these interviews the participants learned that while nearly all their neighbors were familiar with the U.S. emergency telephone number 9-1-1, many knew only some of the local numbers. The emergency system in Uzhhorod is not coordinated, so separate phone numbers are necessary for each agency.

Also during this visit, the U.S. team members interviewed city officials and emergency service providers, such as the ambulance service and fire department. *(slide 6)* We learned about their emergency response capabilities, what they perceived as their most pressing needs in communicating with citizens, and how they felt they could best strengthen the communities' resilience in the face of emergencies. We learned that there was little cooperation between the citizens and the providers of services. One official told us that during one flood, he observed people standing around while the soldiers made and stacked sandbags to protect private property.

Over the next 4 months, the participants continued interviewing their neighbors and met weekly to hear speakers from their local emergency agencies talk about the issues they face and the services they provide. They also learned skills such as first aid.

In April 2001, 14 Ukrainian women traveled to Corvallis for three weeks of training that included team-building exercises (*slide 7*), how to prepare for and respond to natural disasters, how to develop materials and make presentations, and how to motivate others. The group also visited local police and fire departments (*slide 8*). While this was a fun activity and partly designed to give the women a break from more intensive training, it also introduced them to a different model for civilian interaction with authorities.

Also during their visit, Corvallis Sister Cities sponsored a fund-raiser dinner (*slide 9*), with the Ukrainian women preparing typical Ukrainian dishes. They were given the proceeds and have used those funds to support emergency preparedness in Uzhhorod, for example, by purchasing fire extinguishers and first aid kits for schools.

Upon their return to Uzhhorod, the participants worked in teams to develop and make emergency preparedness presentations to their neighbors, and to develop five neighborhood emergency networks. They continued to meet bi-monthly, to share their experiences and trade information about their successes and failures. Some women expanded their presentations from their neighbors to their work sites, with teachers presenting material at school to students, other teachers and staff, and physicians making presentations to other medical professionals, as well as to the parents of pediatric patients. One physician began writing a weekly column about emergency preparedness issues that appears in a local paper.

This project concluded with the visit to Uzhhorod by U.S. team members in April 2002. (*slide 10*) The Uzhhorod project participants hosted an evening of preparedness presentations open to everyone in Uzhhorod. On another evening, a U.S. team member lead a disaster exercise in which the project participants and their neighbors discussed what they would do in specific emergency scenarios.

(*slide 11*) The culminating event of the project was “Day of the Rescuer,” held on a Saturday morning in a pedestrian square where emergency providers had parked their vehicles. (*slide 12*) The ambulance service, fire department and emergency rescue unit demonstrated their equipment and skills. The public had the opportunity to see and touch the equipment used by the fire fighters, children sat in the rescue unit’s truck and tried on a fire fighter’s hat. (*slide 13*) For most people, this was their first opportunity to talk with the rescue professionals or observe their skills.

(*slide 14*) Prior to the Day of the Rescuer, school children were invited to create art depicting safety and emergencies. Their artwork was displayed at Day of the Rescuer.

We began seeing results of this project almost immediately. Uzhhorod experienced flooding in March 2001, in the area where one of our participants lives. Because she had interviewed her neighbors and talked with them about the project, many called her when the water began to rise.

Although this was before the participants had received emergency preparedness training, she became a distributor of information about the flood.

One issue identified during the neighbor interviews was that some of the newer emergency telephone numbers were not well known. (*slide 15*) The group developed and distributed stickers with all the emergency numbers, for people to put on their telephones. The labels helped inform the public of the appropriate numbers, and bring attention to the project every time someone uses the phone.

(*slide 16*) The women also designed and developed a calendar for 2002, that they gave to their neighbors and other project supporters. Each page focused on a different emergency: What to do in a fire. What to include in an emergency kit. At the back of the calendar is a page with the emergency phone numbers and space to write personal numbers.

By adapting the LB NET model to the local environment and needs we were able to develop both a neighborhood preparedness model and women leaders, but not without making changes to fit the model to the local community.

Some of the changes we made to the model were: (*slide 17*)

- That we allowed the project participants and coordinators to determine the focus of the networks. Some of their activities were related more to public safety than emergency preparedness. For example, several neighborhoods that were composed of apartments cleaned out building basements that had been used to store things such as broken furniture. They also cleaned common areas in and around the apartment buildings, and installed locks on common entrance doors.
- Meetings were often one-on-one or small groups, as opposed to the larger neighborhood meetings of LB NET.
- The project participants had to develop their own materials and make their own presentations. Some materials were developed by the Ukrainian coordinators, and some were developed by the women working in teams.
- About half the Women's Networking project participants expanded the program to their work sites.

Uzhhorod had experienced a couple of floods in the years immediately preceding the project, but they have not since the establishment of the neighborhood networks. The neighbors were excited to get the information provided by the project participants, and have continued to discuss emergency issues after the end of the project. There is a desire among the project participants to expand the project to other areas of Ukraine. We envision that future training would be conducted by the original participants, with the U.S. involvement limited to mentoring.

Slide 18, URL for Project Website

Slide 19, Project funding and partners



Neighborhood Emergency Networks in Corvallis, Oregon and Uzhhorod, Ukraine

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LB NET Project

- ❖ The project coordinator is a county employee. A neighborhood volunteer organizes and hosts the meetings.
- ❖ Training by the project coordinator or a trained volunteer who makes presentations to neighborhood groups.
- ❖ Funded through the counties, using county funds and other money donated or raised specifically for the project.
- ❖ Most neighborhoods are made up of single-family homes.



Suggested LB NET Schedule

| | 1 st | 6 mo later | 6 mo later | 6-12 mo later | 6-12 mo later | Annual |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|---------------|---------------|--------|
| Intro. Why? Get manual | ■ | | | | | |
| Table top exercise | | ■ | | | | |
| Neighborhood walk around | | | ■ | | | |
| 1 st Things 1 st practice | | | | ■ | | |
| Functional drill | | | | | ■ | |
| Annual updates to maintain | | | | | | ■ |



Together We're Building Disaster Resistant Communities

**Corvallis - Uzhgorod
Neighborhood Emergency
Training Project**









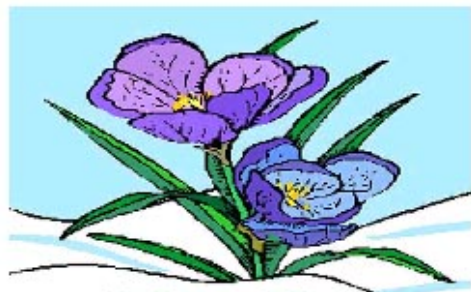












Служба швидкого реагування **064**

Пожежна охорона **01**

Швидка допомога **03**

Календар



малюнок А. Волощук

Абетка безпеки

Ужгород — 2002

ЩО МОЖНА ЗРОБИТИ, ЩОБ ЗАПОбІГТИ ВИНИКНЕННЮ ПОЖЕЖІ.

1. Встановіть сигналізацію:
 - > з зовнішньої сторони спальні;
 - > на кожному поверсі;
 - > раз у рік міняйте батарейки;
 - > щомісяця чистіть пилососом;
 - > перевіряйте справність, натискаючи на тестову кнопку;
 - > кожні 10 років міняйте сигналізацію.
2. Слідкуйте за станом електропроводки та електроприладів:
 - > перевіряйте розетки, вилки, вчасно ремонтуйте;
 - > не сушіть речі біля нагрівальних приладів.
3. Будьте уважними при готуванні їжі:
 - > закривайте рукави, запобігайте загоранню рушників;
 - > якщо загоряється їжа — досить посуд закрити кришкою;
 - > не залишайте на вогні їжу без нагляду.
4. Ніколи не паліть в ліжку.
5. Ховайте від дітей сірники, запальнички.
6. Навчіть дітей правильно користуватися газовою плитою, запалити свічку, багаторазово тренуйте і перевіряйте правильність їх дій.
7. Придбайте вогнегасник і навчіться ним користуватися.



ЛИПЕНЬ 2002

| Понеділок | Вівторок | Середа | Четвер | П'ятниця | Субота | Неділя |
|-----------|----------|--------|--------|----------|--------|--------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |



Changes to the LB NET model to make it appropriate for the Women's Networking Project:

- ❖ Allowed the project participants and coordinators to determine the focus of the networks.
- ❖ Meetings were often one-on-one or small groups.
- ❖ The project participants developed their own materials and make their own presentations.
- ❖ Expanded the program to include work sites.



WNN Website

http://oregonstate.edu/international/oird/ukr_network/





Women's Neighborhood Networking

Funding agency: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Partners in the project:

- ❖ Oregon State University
- ❖ Benton County Emergency Management
- ❖ Uzhhorod Sister Cities Association of Citizens
- ❖ Corvallis Sister Cities
- ❖ City of Uzhhorod
- ❖ Uzhhorod Red Cross
- ❖ Krakow Red Cross
- ❖ Mid-Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross