

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Incorporating Lessons Learned during COVID-19 into Future Planning for Emergencies and Disasters

The COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for disaster planners and responders, bringing to light both shortfalls and opportunities. The rapid pace of operations and ongoing evolution of the public health emergency have prompted modifications to plans and procedures in emergency response; however, many of the leaders within local and state agencies involved in these activities have not yet had an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned or to incorporate them into emergency plans and mitigation strategies.

The observed impacts of the pandemic itself, as well as other disasters that have intersected with it, have also shined a light on the deep inequities that contribute to and reproduce unjust outcomes among marginalized communities.

How do we use what we've learned since the appearance of the novel coronavirus to create more equitable and just systems that support the whole community? What steps can we take to better equip disaster preparedness systems to respond to this ongoing threat and future emergencies? This webinar will bring together perspectives from emergency management, public administration, public health, and disaster science to discuss lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and how those lessons can inform future planning for emergencies and disasters.

Webinar Agenda

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm ET

2:00 pm – 2:05 pm Welcome and Framing

Emily Backes, Societal Experts Action Network
Nnenia Campbell, Natural Hazards Center

2:05 pm – 2:10 pm White Paper Summary

Jeff Schlegelmilch, Director, National Center for Disaster Preparedness

2:10 pm – 2:15 pm Panel Introduction

Curtis Brown, State Coordinator, Virginia Department of Emergency Management
Donell Harvin, Senior Homeland Security Researcher, Defense and Political Science, RAND Corporation

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Leila Darwish, Independent Emergency Management and Disaster
Resilience Consultant

2:15 pm – 2:45 pm	Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflections on Compound Disasters and How Planning Needs to Evolve• Lessons for Equity and Justice
2:45 pm – 3:25 pm	Moderated Q&A Nnenia Campbell, Natural Hazards Center
3:25 pm – 3:30 pm	Closing Reflections Nnenia Campbell, Natural Hazards Center

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Panelist Bios

Curtis Brown

Curtis Brown serves as State Coordinator at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and is Co-Founder of the Institute for Diversity and Inclusion in Emergency Management. He has homeland security and emergency management policy experience at the federal, state, and local levels. Previously, Curtis served as Regional Emergency Management Administrator for the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, professional staff on the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, and Senior Special Assistant to the Governor in the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness.

Curtis received a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Radford University, Master of Public Administration from Virginia Tech, and Master of Arts in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is a graduate of the Virginia Executive Institute, Commonwealth Management Institute, and FEMA's Emergency Management Executive Academy.

Nnenia Campbell

Dr. Nnenia Campbell is a research associate at the Natural Hazards Center and Deputy Director at the Bill Anderson Fund. Her research interests center on the intersections between disaster vulnerability and resilience, particularly within marginalized communities, and the role of community-based organizations in disaster response and recovery. Campbell's work with the Natural Hazards Center involves projects that translate empirical research into tools and information products designed for practitioners and decision-makers. With funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, she leads the development of reports related to COVID-19 and concurrent disasters as part of the Societal Experts Action Network coordinated by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Her current research collaborations include projects related to disaster planning and response capacity among food banks and other community-based organizations; risk communication in the context of concurrent and successive disasters; and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth and older adults. Her work with the Bill Anderson Fund supports leadership and professional development training among historically underrepresented minorities pursuing doctoral degrees in fields related to hazards and disaster research. Campbell's previous research includes studies examining risk perception associated with induced seismicity and toxic exposure; analyses of scientific collaboration and communication in disaster scenario development; and the role of social capital, community context, and organizational capacity in shaping disaster outcomes at later stages of the life course.

Leila Darwish

Leila Darwish is an emergency management and disaster resilience professional, with a deep commitment to supporting impacted communities through innovative, effective and equitable disaster response and recovery. From 2019-2021, she worked for the New Orleans Office of

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. Through the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple hurricanes, she coordinated the New Orleans VOAD, a diverse coalition of over 50 local and national non-profit and community organizations engaged in disaster response and recovery efforts. She also launched and facilitated the City of New Orleans COVID-19 Vaccine Engagement & Equity Task Force. In addition, she served as the project manager for the FEMA-funded City of New Orleans COVID-19 Meal Assistance Program, a unique program that supported local restaurants to provide daily meals to thousands of residents impacted by the pandemic. She is the recipient of an Award for Distinguished Service from the City of New Orleans. Following her position with the City of New Orleans, Leila has worked as a disaster risk and resilience consultant with the United Nations Development Program, as well as served as the Community Outreach and Government Lead for Hurricane Ida response with World Central Kitchen in Louisiana. She has a master's degree in Disaster Resilience Leadership Science from Tulane University.

Donell Harvin, DrPH, MPH, MPA

Dr. Harvin is graduate faculty at Georgetown University where he teaches in the Applied Intelligence and the Emergency and Disaster Management degree programs. He is a Senior Homeland Security Policy Researcher with the RAND Corporation, working with the Defense and Political Sciences Department on relevant homeland and national security issues including terrorism and counterterrorism, public health and all-hazards preparedness, resiliency, and emergency response.

Additionally, he has served as a subject-matter expert for several organizations including the United Nation Counter Terrorism Office, INTERPOL Bioterrorism Unit and the Center for Homeland Security's Executive Education Program (EEP). Dr. Harvin is the former Chief of Homeland Security and Intelligence for the Government of the District of Columbia (DC). He is also the first US-based member of the Counter Terrorism Preparedness Network (CTPN) a global consortium of major cities. He also served as an agency executive in the medical examiner's office for DC and in New York City. Previous to those positions, he was the Chief Research Scientist for the NYC Department of Health in its Bureau of Environmental Emergency Preparedness and Response (BEPR).

His public safety background spans 30 years which includes water rescue, Fire/EMS, public health, hazardous materials and WMD response, emergency management, crime scene management and complex forensic operations. He has responded to incidents ranging from the attacks on the World Trade Center on 9/11 as a member of FDNY to the Sandy Hook Shootings as the forensics lead for NYC, and has served as the lead emergency manager for several NYC agencies during large-scale incidents. Dr. Harvin holds an undergraduate degree in Fire and Emergency Services Management, graduate degrees in Emergency Management (MPA), Terrorism Studies (MA), and Environmental Science (MPH) and is a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) specializing in environmental epidemiology, public health disasters and biological threats.

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Jeff Schlegelmilch

Jeff Schlegelmilch is a Research Scholar and the Director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness, Columbia Climate School, at Columbia University. In this role he oversees the operations and strategic planning for the center. Before becoming director, he served as the center's deputy director for more than five years. He also oversees projects related to the practice and policy of disaster preparedness, including the multi-award winning Resilient Children / Resilient Communities Initiative. His areas of expertise includes public health preparedness, community resilience and the integration of private and public sector capabilities. Prior to his work at Columbia, he was the Manager for the International and Non-Healthcare Business Sector for the Yale New Haven Health System Center for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response. He was also previously an epidemiologist and emergency planner for the Boston Public Health Commission.

He has advised leaders on preparedness systems and policy at all levels of government. He is an Opinion Contributor with The Hill and is frequently utilized as a subject matter expert for numerous media outlets. He is also the author *Rethinking Readiness: A brief guide to twenty-first-century megadisasters* published by Columbia University Press.

He holds a Master's degree in Public Health from UMASS Amherst in Health Policy and Management, and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Quinnipiac University.