1.12 Mutual Aid/Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N)

Folder with resources and templates: 📷 1.12 Mutual Aid

Mutual Aid/N2N groups spring up after disasters like COVID lockdown and flooding to direct resources and help. These community efforts are informal (not housed inside of an organization or part of a State agency), which means they keep barriers to accessing help very low. Groups led by people in impacted communities are often the first to show up and help when disaster strikes, because they are showing up for their own community, and also often know where help is needed most. Identifying who you are already in relationship with and proximity to, and acknowledging that we all have something to offer and all have something we need, is crucial.   Around the world, mutual aid groups have saved lives and improved material conditions for people when official systems of aid have moved too slowly or failed. Mutual aid and N2N work can happen in countless ways. The most important things are that these groups are formed by and for the community, that they promote solidarity not charity, practice cooperation not competition and recognize that our dignity and survival are bound up together.

Mutual Aid Tenets	Mutual Aid Checklist

☐ Get people together in your community to provide material support to each other
☐ Build relationships with your neighbors based on trust and common interests
☐ Make decisions based on consensus vs hierarchy
☐ Share things rather than hoard
☐ Recognize the value in all kinds of support: emotional, food, childcare, translation etc.
	☐ Find a buddy to work with.
	☐ Build a pod map (see Organizing your community section)
	   ☐ Who could help me?
	☐ Connect with those folks. Ask if they can help!
	☐ Identify who and where you can get and give support
	   ☐ My building, my block, my co-workers?
	☐ Start small, with 15-20 people
	☐ Establish communication channels
	☐ Get the conversation started. What needs, goals, other ideas come up for people?
	☐ Offer help: Grocery and medicine pickup, cleaning, company, etc.

1.13 Financial resources

Folder with resources and templates: 📷 1.13 Financial resources

☐ Create a directory of people and organizations that can receive financial resources (particularly 501c3s to receive grants and donations). Look to Vermont Community Foundation's flood fund; Resource Generation; and local flood funds for support.

☐ For short-term needs: create a local network of direct funders (N2N funds, individuals, local businesses) to make specific and sustaining asks of.

☐ For long-term needs: Identify local organizations or people who have skills in making funding proposals to support the response and relief efforts. Consider creating a coalition of organizations active in response to coordinate funding requests.

☐ Contact municipal government, Regional Planning Commissions, Long Term Recovery Groups, and State Representatives and Senators about funding for your community.