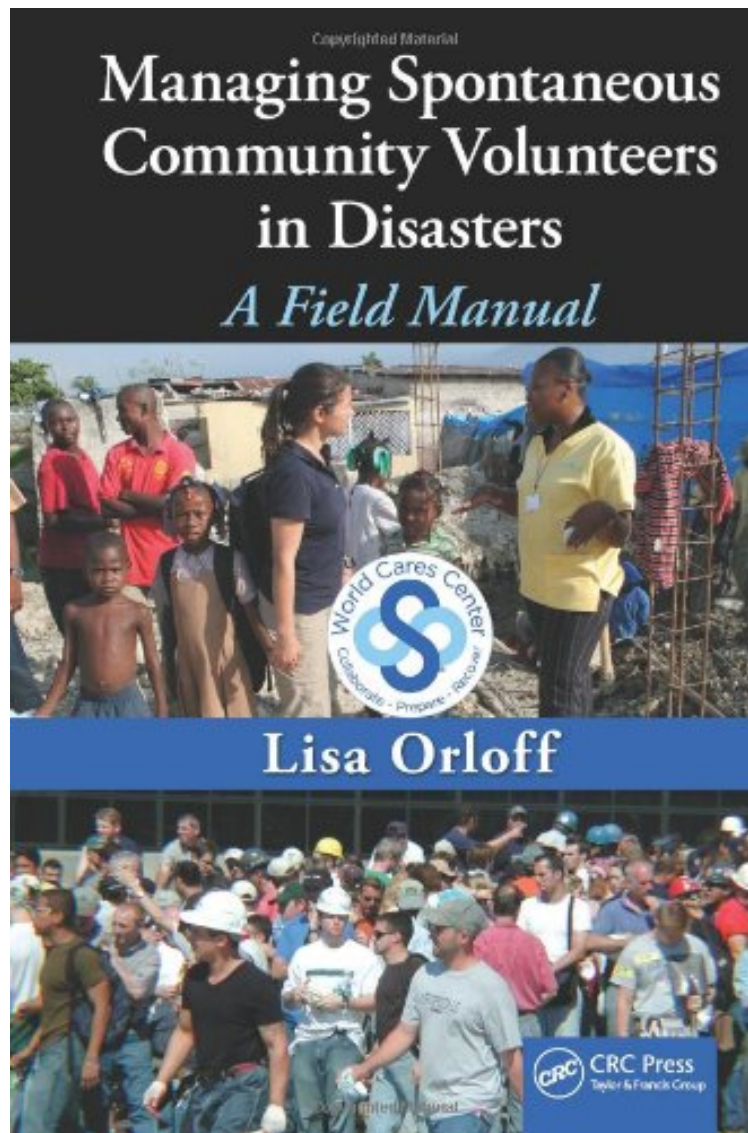


Managing Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters: A Field Manual

Lisa Orloff

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Lisa Orloff : Managing Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters: A Field Manual before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Managing Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters: A Field Manual:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy CharlieItem as described. Smooth transaction.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must read reference on leading and managing volunteers in disasters!By

Novil Wijesekara Volunteers emerge after a disaster, they do their part and they disappear, usually until the next disaster strikes. Serious and in-depth insights into volunteerism in disasters are rare, a rare exception being *Managing Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters A Field Manual* by Lisa Orloff. This piece of work provides a serious discussion on managing spontaneous community volunteers in disasters from the history to future. The first chapter provides an overview of spontaneous volunteerism in a global perspective. This chapter took me back to my experience during 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. I remember with gratitude the efforts of spontaneous volunteers, both local and international, treating those who were alive, pulling out dead bodies, making children laugh and play, clearing rubble, rebuilding houses: in their own ways, just because they wanted to help. In the meantime, I regret about the numerous windows of opportunity that we would have capitalized on if we had a proper system of spontaneous volunteer management as prescribed by Ms. Orloff in the above field manual. I was excited to learn the comparison of cost and time saved by the use of volunteers in disaster recovery versus traditional means in Florida in Osceola County: 83% cost saved and 39% time saved: a fact that is not often highlighted probably because volunteers are thought to be for free! An interesting concept presented in the book is the role of spontaneous volunteers in an ecosystem of supportive partners in disaster response. The ecosystem view examines the usefulness and challenges of volunteers among the multiple stakeholders involved. Building on the idea of volunteers not being a liability, but a resource, the book examines three types of challenges faced by emergency managers with regards to spontaneous volunteers: public challenges, internal challenges and typology of disasters. The interesting thing about the book is that it provides ready to use yet ready to adjust templates that each agency could use to assess its own challenges with regards to the spontaneous volunteers. It is interesting to learn that the Incident Command System which is a well-known tool used by disaster managers has been adopted for spontaneous volunteer management. This is indeed a creative approach where an effort has been made to use the Incident Command System which is a top down approach for effective management of spontaneous volunteers who are ironically not a part of a hierarchical system. Such a system is essential in the inborn chaotic nature disasters or else the valuable energy within the volunteers will not be channeled to its best. In this field manual, the ramification of terms with regards to disaster volunteers is clarified highlighting Spontaneous Unaffiliated Community Volunteers or just-in-time volunteers, the category of interest of this manual. There is a stimulating discussion on the pros and cons of having volunteers in disaster response setting. It has a handy checklist to assess the liability concerns of having volunteers. I am of the opinion that the book is in its peak being a manual towards its fifth chapter, which I enjoyed reading most. I would recommend this chapter alone as a quick reference for a busy disaster manager who has only one hour left before his volunteer recruitment interview. It provides elaborate and step by step advice on volunteer recruitment and management featuring agency responsibilities and developing protocols for volunteers to follow. If you read this chapter carefully, you will get a clear idea of how to get the best out of volunteers who turn up for help and how to avoid potentially unsuitable volunteers politely! If somebody asks the abilities of a good disaster volunteer, I learnt to summarize it by three characteristics, after reading this book. He or she will stay grounded, is a good listener and has ability show empathy. It looks simple, but the author brings in first hand deep evidence from her involvement in 9/11, Hurricane Katrina and Haiti earthquake to prove her case. Volunteer Reception and Point-of-Distribution Model is a versatile yet simple tool proposed for volunteer management. The length and detail of the prescription that the author has for managing a volunteer management center is commendable: team composition, roles of each team member, what each one of them should be provided with and even carefully drawn floor plans of volunteer management areas! I thought it was normal to run volunteer receptions areas in not so effective areas because that is normal for a disaster, but I learnt I was wrong after reading this field manual. Necessary tools and techniques for spot screening, assessment and selection are provided in this Manual. The five types of questions and the decision making tool presented in the book are practical, simple and innovative. I am going to use them in my next volunteer recruitment interview! A number of proactive management approaches have been introduced in the field manual. Promotion of understanding between the managers and the volunteers is described. Orientation of the volunteers with the strategic objectives of the organization and team building methods suitable for disaster settings are elaborated in the manual. It is interesting to learn that a whole chapter has been dedicated to assessing and promotion of wellbeing of volunteers. I have observed in many occasions volunteers breaking down, including myself, simply because they have not been looked after! The technology should not be a barrier for volunteerism but a blessing. The final chapter of the book looks at how disaster volunteerism could flourish in the era of Wikis, Twitter and Flickr! The author generously shares her own experiences with the Ready Responders Network an initiative by the World Cares Center, which is a free, web-based platform that could bring different stakeholders together using new technologies. *Managing Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters A Field Manual* by Lisa Orloff describes how the asset of volunteerism that emerges out of humility could be utilized to for the benefit of humanity! It is a necessary reference that every disaster manager should have! Dr. Novil Wijesekara Disaster Preparedness and Response Division Ministry of Health Sri Lanka M.B.B.S, M. Sc. (Disaster Management), M.Sc. (Community Medicine) Diploma in Human Rights and Peace Education, Diploma in Diplomatic Studies and Foreign Relations

While history has identified a need for improved coordination during emergencies, it has also demonstrated that community volunteers positively impact their neighborhoods during times of crisis. Laying out the rationale and process by which emergency managers, community leaders, and non-governmental aid organizations can effectively collaborate and integrate citizen response, *Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters* explains how to engage, train, and utilize spontaneous unaffiliated community volunteers (SUCV). The book prepares leaders to integrate local volunteers into any scale emergency response. Protocols and flexible management solutions are outlined to ensure safe and effective planning and execution. Work templates provided can be modified to suit the needs of any community. This accessible manual provides the tools to: Assess your agency's role, tasks, and challenges to meet community needs in a disaster Build a plan for managing SUCVs by developing internal and external protocols Develop effective spot screening and selection methods Engage community members in information-sharing and outreach campaigns Consider policies and procedures that create relevant roles for volunteers and community groups to build a resilient team for disaster recovery Provide National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant answers to address common barriers to using SUCVs Combining field experience and psychosocial research, the book makes a strong case as to why community involvement in disaster response will have a positive impact on a community's resilient recovery. Praise for *Spontaneous Community Volunteers in Disasters*: All emergency management coordinators can benefit from this book. Howard Butt, New Jersey State Police, State CERT Coordinator Lisa Orloff has done an excellent job in both identifying a significant opportunity in emergency response and meticulously outlining how that opportunity can best be leveraged. Dr. Michael Chumer, New Jersey Institute of Technology The Alliance for Nonprofit Management has nominated the book for the Terry McAdam Award. This award is bestowed upon the Committee's choice for the most inspirational and useful new book published for the nonprofit sector.

The role of the volunteer is becoming more important in the planning, development, and implementation of an effective emergency response. World Cares Centers training on how to best utilize spontaneous volunteers has made New Jersey better prepared to address this issue and maximize the value that these volunteers contribute to response and recovery efforts. All emergency management coordinators can benefit from this book. Howard Butt, New Jersey State Police, State CERT Coordinator Lisa Orloff has done an excellent job in both identifying a significant opportunity in emergency response and meticulously outlining how that opportunity can best be leveraged. Spontaneous volunteers are vital to the success of an emergency response, and, as such, they must be harnessed and led in a planned, focused manner. The author should be commended for articulating this opportunity and packaging it in a manner that benefits the entire emergency response effort. Dr. Michael Chumer, New Jersey Institute of Technology About the Author About the Author: As Founder and Executive Director of World Cares Center, Lisa Orloff has taken her experiences as a spontaneous unaffiliated volunteer during the September 11 relief efforts and created an organization that addresses our nation's most valuable yet underutilized resources: everyday citizens. As a spontaneous unaffiliated volunteer, Ms. Orloff created an impromptu supply chain running from the Jacob Javits Center to triage units around Ground Zero using available resources, a map from the telephone book, and her personal cell phone. To fill the unmet need of necessary supplies, Ms. Orloff managed over 300 other spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers and supported official responders working in collaboration with the NYPD, the Army National Guard, and a host of other agencies. She emerged as a liaison between community volunteers and government agencies, most notably FEMA and OEM, working together on community-focused long-term recovery initiatives. Taking from her 9/11 experiences and subsequent all-hazards responses, Ms. Orloff remains committed to supporting national initiatives that enhance community-led response and recovery efforts in areas preparing for or recovering from disasters. Ms. Orloff continues to work with an ever growing team of curriculum steering committee members, seasoned facilitators, and emergency managers to develop and deliver community-based programs that bridge the gaps in education, communication, and collaboration. Ms. Orloff serves as a subject matter expert working with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Networks and Information Integration on the development of the Ready Responders Network. Ms. Orloff continues to gauge the needs of the community on how to effect cross-sector communication, and develop an information sharing network for Emergency Managers, NGO's, CBO's and community members to communicate in preparedness, response and recovery initiatives. Ms. Orloff has keyed World Cares Centers growth from a grassroots volunteer-led effort to a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization with national preparedness and recovery initiatives. She is an established international speaker on spontaneous volunteer management, responder self-care, community preparedness initiatives, and building resiliency within disaster-affected communities. Ms. Orloff is a member of the UN WHO Mental Health Committee, Representative of World Cares Center associated with the Department of Public Information of the UN, the National Institute for Urban Search and Rescue, International Association of Emergency Managers, NYC-VOAD, NVOAD, NOVAs National Community Crisis Response Team, and the Advisory Boards of Citizen Corps and the WTC Health Registry. She is also a board member of NYCVOAD, My Good Deed and Arts for All. Ms. Orloff is a graduate of the Institute for Not-for-Profit Managements Executive Level Program at Columbia University's Graduate School of Business. She is a recipient of the Mayors Voluntary

Action Award for her service during 9/11.