



Coalition Leadership Guide



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Introduction

Foundation

The foundation of a local church coalition is local leadership. Leadership takes different forms in the various stages of coalition development. Depending on the coalition context and scope of activity, staff leadership may be needed. Whatever the stage or staffing, it takes a group of committed church leaders to fulfill the essential functions of a successful coalition.

Recommendations

The Coalition Leadership Guide offers recommendations drawing upon The Church Responds shared principles, general collaborative team-based leadership principles, and the experience of our local church coalitions. Though every coalition has a unique character, we believe these recommendations will help all coalitions fulfill their potential. We also welcome new insights from leadership teams on how to improve the content of the Guide.

Coalition Stages

The champion, launch, functional, and operational stages call for different forms of leadership, reflecting the progression from start-up to established organization. Depending on the need, the operational stage may come and go (such as home repair operations after a weather disaster). Ideally, all coalitions will reach the functional stage with a leadership team fulfilling the essential functions.

Leader Profile

Leadership teams that effectively engage and represent local churches consist of church leaders, including pastors, staff, and church members. Leaders of non-church entities (non-profits, businesses, etc.) may also serve, but we recommend that teams always consist primarily of church leaders.

Function and Form

The Coalition Leadership Guide describes the essential functions of successful coalitions. The leadership team and The Church Responds advisor discern the form and structure (size, scope, duration) the team will take.

The Church Responds Advisor

The Church Responds provides an advisor to guide, coach, and resource leadership teams in all coalition stages. *More information on the advisors may be found in “The Church Responds Advisor” section.*

Champion Team

The initial stage of coalition formation begins with a small group of local church leaders who serve as the champion team.

Trusted

The champion team includes church leaders who are known and trusted in the church community. Champions are often senior or executive leaders who are established and respected in the church community can reach across denominational and theological lines. While the vision of church collaboration through a local church coalition may not yet be clear, we find that effective champions are able to bring other church leaders into the conversation due to their status as trusted colleagues.

Advocates

Champions see the need for a church collaboration and use their communication skills and relational capital to invite their colleagues to participate. Champions lead the initial effort to develop confidence in coalition formation as a vehicle for collaboration and to develop trust in the initial leadership provided by The Church Responds. Champions are knowledgeable about the coalition model and can effectively share that knowledge in their advocacy for coalition formation.

Conveners

Champions are often pastors or key church leaders with history in the community, existing networks of church colleagues, and an ability to convene or address existing groups of those church colleagues to advocate for coalition formation.

Time Commitment

Champions serve at least until engaging a critical mass of coalition participants from which sufficient leaders can be drawn for a launch team. The time commitment is short-term, usually lasting one to three months. Champions may serve on the launch team or continue advocating as part of the broader coalition.

The Church Responds Advisor

The advisor does initial contact work, identifies and orients champions, communicates the vision and strategy, provides initial administration and support, and guides the transition to establishing a launch team.

Launch Team

The launch team's task is entrepreneurial, essentially leading the start-up phase of the coalition. Some key tasks of the launch team include identifying and establishing:

- Mission, vision values
- Geographical boundaries and coalition name
- Initial focus (e.g., readiness, recovery, critical community need)
- Strategy for continued church engagement
- Communications platform and rhythm for coalition gatherings
- Budget, fundraising, and staffing plan, as needed
- Plan for transition to leadership team and fulfillment of essential functions

Leader Profile

Launch teams usually have five to ten members, primarily pastors and other church staff. Entrepreneurial skills are essential, along with relational, organizational, and strategic planning skills.

Representation

Ideally, the launch team represents the ethnic, socio-economic, and geographic diversity of the coalition community and continues developing a representative coalition of churches.

Partnerships

The launch team develops a coalition that seeks not to duplicate or compete with other entities but to partner with them to amplify what they do and address the community's unmet needs.

Time Commitment

The launch stage usually runs three to six months, including regular team meetings and tasks, with the frequency depending on the availability of leaders and desired timeframe to complete the launch.

The Church Responds Advisor

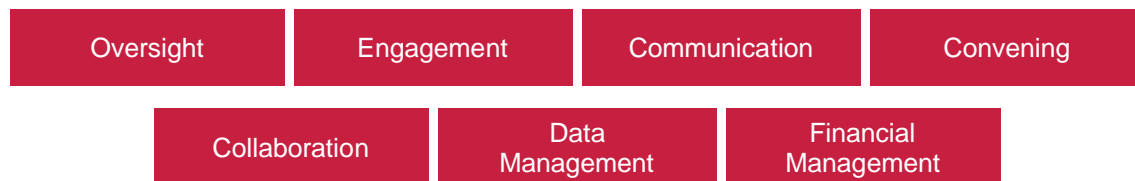
The advisor helps identify and orient leaders, integrates shared principles, ensures completion of launch team tasks, cultivates a collaborative team-based approach, and guides transition to a leadership team.

Leadership Team: Overview

The leadership team's role is to fulfill the essential functions of a sustainable long-term coalition.

Essential Functions

Drawing upon the shared principles, collaborative leadership models, and our own experience, we have identified these essential functions of successful coalitions.



Optional Operational Function

A coalition may seek to meet a need, such as home repairs, on a scale that calls for a centralized operation. If so, it may enter the operational stage until the need is met or resources run out.

Structure

Given the coalition's scope and available leadership skills, a single team may fulfill all essential functions or include sub-teams for specific functions. *Additional options can be found in "The Leadership Team: Structure" section.*

Leader Profile

Leadership teams include about six to twelve people, including primarily pastors, church staff, and church leaders. As it organizationally develops, the team will need more managerial as well as leadership skills.

Representation

Ideally, the leadership team is representative of the ethnic, socio-economic, and geographic diversity of the coalition community and continues developing a representative coalition of churches.

Time Commitment

The functional stage is ongoing, and leadership teams establish annual rhythms and terms. They meet regularly, with some ongoing tasks and annual occasions for annual and strategic planning.

The Church Responds Advisor

The advisor helps identify and orient leaders, integrates shared principles, cultivates a collaborative team-based approach, ensures the essential functions are fulfilled, and facilitates strategic planning.

Leadership Team: Structure

With the help of its advisor, the leadership team discerns its optimal form or structure (size, sub-groups, etc.) The structure may change over time depending on coalition scope, available leadership, and other variables. Ideally, the leadership structure will include, at a minimum, a leadership team and workgroups. The following are some possible options:

Option 1: Leadership Team & Workgroups: The leadership team fulfills all functions with workgroup leaders connected through the leadership team member for collaboration. *The definition of a workgroup is available in “Leadership Team: Collaboration” section.*



Option 2: Leadership Team, Sub-Teams & Workgroups: Like Option 1 except with a sub-team that fulfills an essential function. For example, pastors who were champions may prefer not to serve on the leadership team but on a sub-team focused on continued engagement. The leadership team may also decide that fulfilling the communications function requires its own team.



The Church Responds Advisor

The advisor coaches the leadership team on setting up its structure and provides examples from other coalitions and resources for developing a collaborative team-based leadership model.

Leadership Team: Roles

Leadership Roles

We have found that successful leadership teams have leaders with clear roles that fulfill an essential function. Ideally, at least one person will be assigned to each role. Some key elements of each role are included below. *Further description of each role can be found on the “Leadership Team: Functions” sections.*

Oversight

Provides direction for the coalition in keeping with guiding principles, accountability for fulfilling essential functions, and representation of the coalition to community partners and The Church Responds.

Engagement

Develops and implements a primarily relational strategy for engaging the majority and diversity of churches in the community, provides effective messaging, and tracks engagement progress.

Communication

Establishes a platform for communications within, between, and directly to churches, using social media and various communication tools, with a focus on sharing stories of collaborative efforts and opportunities to serve.

Convening

Facilitates scheduling coalition gatherings, provides agendas, moderates gatherings, arranges venues (virtual and in-person), and invites and tracks participation.

Collaboration

Guides discernment in addressing community needs, catalyzes the formation of workgroups, supports workgroup leaders, connects similar workgroups across coalitions, helps with data collection.

Data Management

Communicates the purpose and value of data collection, trains and assists church leaders, provides reporting rhythm, executes reminders and follow-up, manages and reports data to The Church Responds.

Financial Management

Manages accounting for receipt and distribution of monetary and in-kind donations, facilitates the setting of fundraising goals and a fundraising strategy to meet them.

Operations (Optional)

Oversees operations for meeting a specific community need, such as significant numbers of home repairs, that requires a centralized operation to meet it. We call this an “optional function” as it may never be necessary and may come and go.

The Church Responds Advisor

Advises, coaches, and resources leadership teams in all coalition stages. More information on the advisors may be found in “The Church Responds Advisor” section.

Oversight

The leadership team stewards and cares for the coalition by providing direction, accountability, and representation for the organization.

Direction

The leadership team provides direction by listening to the voices of the Spirit, the churches, and the community, guided by The Church Responds shared principles and key priorities including:

- Preparing churches to respond to crises in their communities
- Cultivating a collaborative team-based approach to church engagement
- Appealing to the majority and diversity of local churches.

Accountability

The leadership team is accountable for fulfilling its purpose by:

- Guiding the coalition according to the Shard Principles
- Identifying and equipping leaders to fulfill the essential functions
- Wisely stewarding the resources entrusted to it.

Representation

As the coalition becomes established, the leadership team represents it to:

- Other non-profits, agencies, and partners
- Other coalitions and The Church Responds
- Potential donors and supporters.

Engagement

The leadership team regularly engages new churches while also maintaining and deepening relationships with existing church partners.

Representation

We believe that a healthy local coalition appeals to the majority and diversity of churches in the community. To achieve broad representation, engagement leaders may focus on a particular geographic area and/or association of churches (ethnic, denominational, etc.).

Messaging

The leadership team provides clear and consistent messaging in various media to equip engagement leaders and communicate directly to the church leaders and the broader community.

Relationships

We have found that the most effective means of engagement is developing relationships with church leaders and amongst church leaders who become advocates to their colleagues and personal networks.

Multiple Strategies

A successful engagement strategy will likely include multiple engagement opportunities, such as coalition gatherings, workgroup collaborations, and volunteer-friendly projects.

Consistency and Tracking

Successful engagement requires consistency and perseverance. We recommend setting engagement goals and maintaining a database of current and potential contacts to track progress.

Communication

The leadership team develops a platform for effective communications within, between, and directly to churches. We believe that cultivating communication between churches is especially critical for growing a coalition and cultivating collaborative efforts.

Within Churches

The leadership team encourages churches to assess their internal communications capability for crisis response and helps to identify solutions.

Between Churches

We believe that effective communication between church leaders is the key to building relationships that make church collaboration possible. The leadership team provides applications for:

- **Group Messaging:** To facilitate ongoing church-to-church communications for cultivating relationships, sharing needs and resources, and preparing for collaboration in response to a crisis (GroupMe, etc.)
- **Video Conferencing:** To facilitate regular coalition gatherings and gatherings when responding to a crisis (Zoom, Skype, etc.)

To Churches

The leadership team develops a strategy for communicating to participating churches that celebrates accomplishments and provides opportunities to participate. Some approaches we have found effective:

- Sharing stories from churches highlighting collaborative projects, volunteer experiences, and neighbors who are served, along with upcoming opportunities to collaborate and serve
- Communicating regularly with some combination of periodic “newsletter” and “short story” posts, utilizing multiple social media and various communication tools (web page, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

With The Church Responds

The leadership team facilitates communication between the coalition, The Church Responds, and community partners. A team member participates in regular meetings of The Church Responds coalitions.

Convening

The leadership team regularly convenes church leaders for communication, building relationships, identifying needs and resources, and cultivating collaboration.

Format

Coalition gatherings take multiple forms, such as in-person or video conferencing. The leadership team and/or participants identify the form and rhythm that fits the coalition.

Participants and Sub-Groups

Gathering participants are representatives of participating churches, often pastors, staff, or members, and are typically called “response coordinators.” Sub-groups of participants defined by geography, language, etc., may gather periodically as part of the larger coalition gathering.

Rhythm

The coalition and leadership team decide when and how to gather. We recommended that coalitions gather with an annual rhythm, with a combination of in-person and virtual gatherings. The rhythm may include seasonal gatherings such as hurricane season preparations or fundraising. *Examples of annual rhythms can be found in the “Convening: Annual Rhythm” section.*

Content

We have found that gatherings are most effective when they focus primarily on developing relationships, identifying needs and resources in the community, and exploring collaborative solutions. The leadership team ensures that agendas for gatherings are relevant and well-moderated. *Sample agendas may be found on the “Convening: Regular Gathering Agendas” section.* We recommended that notes from gatherings be distributed to coalition participants.

Ongoing Communication

The leadership team also sets up a group messaging application, such as GroupMe, for ongoing communication and in preparation for crisis response. *More information available in the “Leadership Team: Functions” section on “Communication.”*

Collaboration

The leadership team cultivates a collaborative, team-based approach to working together. We see collaborations, or “workgroups,” as multiple churches working together to address a particular need and as one of the most effective ways to mobilize the collective body of Christ.

Guidance

The leadership team facilitates discernment of which critical needs to address collectively, catalyzes the formation of workgroups, helps identify leadership, and supports their work.

Participation

Workgroup participants include church leaders and members and possibly representatives of community partners. A workgroup may consist of representatives from two or more, or all, coalition churches.

Leadership/Representation

The leadership team and/or the workgroup identifies a workgroup leader who interfaces with the leadership team and coalition. The leader represents the workgroup in coalition gatherings.

Initiation

When churches initiate a response to a community need, they may invite the collaboration of other churches and form a workgroup. Churches, or the leadership team, may bring a need to the coalition for collective consideration, around which a workgroup forms.

Range of Needs

The leadership team guides the coalition’s discernment of needs to address. Outcomes may vary, from knowledge (location of food desert) to best practices (e.g., how to run a food pantry) or mobilizing volunteers (e.g., receiving and distributing food).

Rhythm and Duration

We recommend that workgroups set clear goals, meet on a rhythm that fits the participants and purpose, and establish an estimated duration for the project.

Data Collection

Workgroups may engage volunteers that generate measurable results, from volunteer hours to families served and in-kind distributions. The leadership team ensures that workgroups are well-equipped to gather data that tells their collaboration story.

Data Management

Leadership teams help local churches collect data that helps tell the story of their individual and collaborative efforts. These stories raise awareness of needs, create opportunities to serve, demonstrate God's love for our neighbors, and prove helpful when request support or funding.

Key Metrics

- Projects
- Volunteer Hours
- Families/Individuals served
- Home repairs completed
- Labor and materials cost
- Distributions (monetary and in-kind)

Further definition of these metrics may be found in the "Local Church Data Collection: Accuracy & Definitions" section.

Tracking

The leadership team provides an application for church leaders to collect and share their data regularly. We recommend a simple and user-friendly method such as a Google Form or spreadsheet.

Rhythm

We recommend that churches collect data monthly or, at the very least, quarterly. The leadership team provides regular reminders and target dates for collecting and sharing data.

Managing & Reporting

The leadership team manages the data and shares it with The Church Responds. The Church Responds provides a method for managing and reporting the data.

Support

Collecting data may be new to a local church and can be challenging. The leadership team reminds, encourages, and supports local church leaders in their efforts.

Financial Management

On behalf of the coalition, leadership teams may receive and/or raise donations, both monetary and in-kind (materials, services, etc.) Some common uses of donations include project support, overhead expenses, and coalition staff.

Managing Funds

As primarily volunteer-led organizations, most coalitions opt not to become 501c3 non-profit corporations. For these coalitions, The Church Responds serves as a fiscal sponsor and provides:

- Banking and accounting for funds received and distributed by the leadership team
- A “Doing Business As” for the coalition and bank account in its name
- Support for the leadership team’s management and accountability of its funds

Receiving Funds

When receiving monetary donations, coalitions may direct donors to The Church Responds website, which provides instructions for designating the recipient coalition and the various methods for transferring funds (online, mail, etc.). The Church Responds can receive, designate, and distribute funds on behalf of the coalition in coordination with the leadership team.

Raising Funds

We encourage coalitions to set annual goals for raising funds and distributing or “investing value” into the community. The leadership team leads the effort to set and fulfill fundraising goals. The Church Responds provides coaching and support for fundraising efforts. Some basic elements of a coalition fundraising plan may include:

- Setting coalition goals and identifying the funds needed
- Establishing a minimum annual commitment for participating churches
- Planning an annual fundraising campaign similar to other non-profits
- Holding an annual gathering for reporting, engaging, and fundraising

Operations (Optional)

Coalitions may endeavor to meet a need, such as significant numbers of home repairs, that requires a centralized operation to meet it. We call this an “optional function” as it may never be necessary and may come and go. In the operational stage, the leadership team continues to fulfill the essential functions.

Centralization

Centralized operations provide a solution when the scope of the need is too large and complex for decentralized collaborative efforts to meet it. For example, some churches may adopt a family needing home repair and have the resources and volunteers to complete it. When the number of home repairs is large enough, it may be necessary to develop a centralized “construction operation” in which churches and their volunteers can participate without having to manage the operation.

Initiation

Ideally, a workgroup is formed around the specific need that requires some type of centralized operation. A workgroup can collaboratively consider the need and potential solutions and then work with the leadership team to discern how to address it.

Leadership/Staffing

A centralized operation will typically require some staffing, whether paid or volunteer. For example, centralized home repair operations may include a construction supervisor, volunteer coordinator, and site supervisor. If the coalition is part of The Church Responds 501c3, we work with the leadership team to hire staff and provide human resources support.

Church Participation

While it may be necessary to centralize operations and hire staff to effectively meet a particular need, the purpose is not to decrease but to increase the participation of churches and their volunteers. The Church Responds and the leadership team ensure that a centralized operation serves to mobilize as many churches as possible to love their neighbors in need.

The Church Responds Advisor

The Church Responds provides an advisor to facilitate, coach, and resource leadership teams. The advisor's role adapts to fit the coalition's stage of development, generally moving from being more entrepreneurial to more advisory. The advisor fills in leadership team gaps as able.

Champion Stage

The advisor does initial contact work, identifies potential champions, communicates the vision, provides initial administration and support, and guides the transition to a launch team.

Launch Stage

The advisor helps identify and orient leaders, ensures completion of launch team tasks, cultivates a collaborative team-based approach, and guides the transition to a leadership team.

Functional Stage

Key responsibilities the advisor fulfills with an established leadership team are:

- Ensures continued integration of The Church Responds shared principles
- Coaches and resources leaders to fulfill their roles, with focus on the oversight role
- Provides resources from The Church Responds knowledge base and other coalitions
- Arranges for any needed training
- Fills leadership team gaps as able

Key Advisor Roles

- Facilitation of a collaborative team-based approach to leadership
- Coaching team members to fulfill their roles, with focus on the oversight role
- Resourcing the team with knowledge, best practices, and training

The Church Responds Support

The Church Responds provides support to coalitions including:

Knowledge

Resources, training, and best practices to equip churches for responding to disasters, crises, and critical needs. *Go to www.houstonresponds.org/resources or contact the director of communications.*

Programs

Core competencies such as congregational readiness, leadership team strategic planning, and coalition fundraising. *Go to www.houstonresponds.org/readiness or contact your coalition advisor.*

Communications/Branding

Communication platforms (web page, social media, etc.), communication content, coalition branding and marketing. Contact your coalition advisor or the director of communications.

Data Management

Applications and training for collecting data from local churches and managing and reporting coalition data to The Church Responds. Contact your coalition advisor.

Accounting

Fiscal sponsorship of The Church Responds, accounting and reporting for funds, DBAs (“Doing Business As”), and coalition checking accounts. Contact your coalition advisor or the director of finance & administration.

Human Resources

Employee handbook, benefits and human resources for coalition employees, and support for contractors. Contact your coalition advisor or the director of finance & administration.

Insurance

Information and counsel on liability and coverage for coalitions, collaborations, and volunteer activities. Contact your coalition advisor or the director of finance & administration.

Collaboration

Facilitation of collaborative efforts with other coalitions across The Church Responds network. Contact your coalition advisor or the director of coalitions.

The Church Responds Advisor

Advise, coach, and resource leadership teams in all coalition stages. *More information on the advisors may be found in “The Church Responds Advisor” section.*

The Church Responds Staff

Last	First	Position	Email	Phone
Burns	Thomasina	Dir. of Programs, Coalition Advisor	thomasina@thechurchresponds.org	281-772-1000
Clark	Irvin	Racial Reconciliation Advisor	irvin@thechurchresponds.org	713-443-4335
Henneke	Colleen	Dir. of Finance & Administration	colleen@thechurchresponds.org	281-701-0789
Rosson	Tommy	Executive Dir.	tommy@thechurchresponds.org	469-767-9995
Schulz	Jeff	Dir. of Coalitions	jeff@thechurchresponds.org	206-947-5445
Scott	Tammi	Coalition Advisor	tammi@thechurchresponds.org	832-414-8167
Theriot	Duane	Dir. of Communications	duane@thechurchresponds.org	832-425-9765
Topper	Matthew	Coalition Advisor	topper@thechurchresponds.org	781-883-4077



Convening: Annual Rhythm

We recommend that coalitions gather regularly with an annual rhythm. Below are some examples of annual rhythms. These examples also include leadership team meetings so that all meetings/gatherings taken together are distributed as evenly as possible. (“VC” = Video Conferencing; “IP” = In Person).

Leadership Team Meeting Definitions

Regular: 30-60 min, VC or IP, for ongoing fulfillment of essential functions

Planning: 2-4 hours, VC or IP, for quarterly planning, special, and annual gatherings

Annual: 4-8 hours, IP, for leadership team orientation, goal setting, and annual rhythm.

Coalition Gathering Definitions

Regular: 30-60 min, VC or IP, for check-in, updates, opportunities, and ongoing collaboration

Special: 1-2 hours, IP, for relationship building, special content/speaker

Annual: 2-3 hours, IP, for annual gathering, reporting, and fundraising

Regional: Gatherings of distinct geographic areas within a coalition

Example 1:

Quarter	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Leaders	Planning	Regular	Regular	Planning	Regular	Regular	Planning	Regular	Regular	Planning	Regular	Regular
Coalition	Regular	Regular	Special	Regular	Regular	Special	Regular	Regular	ANNUAL	Regular	Regular	Special

Example 2:

Quarter	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Leaders	Planning	Regular		Planning	Regular		Planning	Regular		Planning	Regular	
Coalition		Regular	ANNUAL		Regular	Special		Regular	Special		Regular	Special

Example 3 (with regional gatherings):

Quarter	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Leaders	Planning	Regular	Regular	Planning	Regular	Regular	Planning	Regular	Regular	Planning	Regular	Regular
Coalition	Regular	Regional	Special	Regular	Regional	Special	Regular	Regional	ANNUAL	Regular	Regional	Special

Example 4 (with regional gatherings):

Quarter	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Leaders	Planning	Regular		Planning	Regular		Planning	Regular		Planning	Regular	
Coalition	Regional	Regular	Regional		Special	Regular	Regional		ANNUAL	Regular	Regional	

Convening: Regular Gathering Agendas

Coalition gatherings focus on connectedness, readiness, and shared knowledge of community needs and collaboration. Local and seasonal needs will naturally shape agendas (e.g., upcoming hurricane season). Below are some agenda elements and examples.

Regular Gathering

A regular gathering is usually 30-60 minutes by video conference, or occasionally in person if convenient and needed. The primary purpose of the regular gathering is maintaining relational connection, providing reports and updates, discussing needs and resources, and opportunities to collaborate.

The following is a list of typical items from which the leadership team might select in creating an agenda depending on gathering length, number of participants, and coalition scope.

Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Prayer: *Asking for God's blessing and guidance*

Check-In: *Relational connecting, with guided questions*

Leadership Team Report: *Stating the mission, providing updates, reviewing selected essential functions, sharing data results, announcing upcoming opportunities.*

Speaker (Optional): *Briefly addressing a special topic*

Needs/Resources: *Open conversation identifying and discussing community needs/resources*

Collaboration: *Reporting from workgroups engaged in collaboration or discussion about a critical need that might call for collaboration and the formation of a workgroup.*

Closing Prayer: *Sharing prayer requests and closing prayer*

Regional Gathering

Coalitions may have sub-groups (geographic, language, etc.) that have their own gatherings. These gatherings will likely follow the agenda for regular gatherings.

Convening: Special Gathering Agendas

Special gatherings are usually in-person, often with a meal and speaker/program. We recommended holding several per year, as they help to build relationships. Agendas are similar to regular gatherings, with more time for relationship building, speaker/program content, and coalition updates.

Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Prayer: *Asking for God's blessing and guidance*

Meal: *Something simple and easy to serve (e.g., buffet, box lunch)*

Check-In: *Relational connecting, with guided questions*

Speaker/Program: *Substantially addressing a special topic, such as collaboration, a critical need in the community, etc.*

Needs/Resources: *Open conversation identifying and discussing community needs/resources*

Collaboration: *Reporting from workgroups engaged in collaboration or discussion about a critical need that might call for collaboration and the formation of a workgroup*

Small Group Sharing and Prayer: *Extended time in small groups for personal sharing, prayer requests, and prayer for one another*

Convening: Annual & Fundraising Gathering Agendas

Annual Gathering

An annual gathering is similar to a special gathering but focuses on reviewing the prior year and looking forward to the coming year. The main objectives include celebrating accomplishments, casting vision and goals, and inviting commitment to participate. The annual gathering can serve as a fundraiser as well.

Possible Agenda Items:

Opening Prayer: *Asking for God's blessing and guidance*

Meal: *Likely a more formal served meal*

Leadership Team/Annual Report: *Presentation of an annual report, "state of the coalition," introduction of leadership team members*

Stories: *Testimonies of church leaders, volunteers, and families served*

Speaker/Program: *Substantially addressing one or more of the reasons why supporting the collaboration of churches for crisis response is critical to the community*

Annual Goals: *Vision, goals, financial needs for the upcoming year*

Invitation to Participate: *Opportunity to commit to participating in the coalition*

Invitation to Give: *Opportunity to make a financial commitment to support the coalition and/or coalition projects*

Closing Prayer

Fundraising Gathering

Fundraising may be part of an annual gathering or independent of it, depending on the needs, scope, and annual rhythm of the coalition. A fundraising gathering will likely have a similar agenda to an annual gathering but be more focused on the fundraising objective. The Church Responds provides consultation on coalition fundraising campaigns for local coalitions.

Data Management: Local Church Data Collection

Why, Who, What, When, How

Our coalition leadership team helps you gather data and stories to track and share how your church is responding to disasters, crises, and critical needs in the community.

Why

Sharing stories raises awareness of local needs and service opportunities, encourages the church, demonstrates God's love for our neighbors, and proves helpful when requesting support or funding. It also helps The Church Responds share more broadly the stories of how churches are responding, individually and collectively, across many local church coalitions. *Story examples can be found in the Houston Responds e-news and coalition annual updates at www.houstonresponds.org.*

Who

Our coalition leadership team provides guidance, reminders, and any support needed to collect and share data. We recommend designating a point person for collecting data and sharing your data.

What

The Church Responds and our local coalition collect data on church response to disaster, crisis, or critical need in the community, by individual churches or church collaborations. *Definitions of key metrics are available in the "Local Church Data Collection: Accuracy & Definitions" section.*

When

To make it easier and more accurate, we recommended that you collect data monthly and share it with the leadership team monthly or quarterly, at the very least. Our coalition leadership team provides a monthly rhythm and reminders for sharing data.

How

We provide a simple Google Form for sharing your monthly data, which will be sent at regular monthly intervals. We can also provide a summary of your previous data if helpful.

Support

If you need assistance collecting or sharing your data, our leadership team and The Church Responds are glad to help. Feel free to contact your leadership for any help that you need.

Data Management: Local Church Data Collection

Accuracy & Definitions

The sooner you collect and share your data, the more efficient and accurate it will be. When data was not collected at the time of an event, but there is a memory of it, we encourage making conservative estimates. The following are basic definitions of metrics for tracking congregational activity, specifically in response to disasters, crises, and critical needs in the community.

Projects

Any activity undertaken by individuals or groups in a congregation or in collaboration with other churches (e.g., food distribution, home repair, compassionate care training).

Volunteer Hours

Volunteer hours (vs. individual volunteers); from planning a food distribution to physically distributing food. All volunteer hours in the process may be included.

People Served

Distinct families or individuals served through congregation activities.

Home Repairs

A home repair project completed, however defined, from a specific project to complete restoration.

Labor and Materials

The total cost of paid labor, materials, and any other related expenses.

Distributions

Distributions made by churches to people in need, either monetary (e.g., for rent, utilities) or in-kind, including goods and services such as food, water, construction materials, or a tradesperson's services. In-kind distributions are valued at the market rate.

The Church Responds provides guidance for valuing in-kind donations and distributions.