

First Steps for a Community Recovering from Catastrophe

TIPS + CHECKLIST

Coordinate Charitable Support with Structure and Transparency

Key preventive measures:

- Vetting charities and relief funds
- Conducting random audits and spot checks
- Using third-party monitors
- Creating portals to report abuse or mismanagement
- Implementing transparent, tech-enabled tracking

Where to Start: Essential Objectives

Successful early-stage coordination focuses on:

1. Organize charitable and NGO-led aid
2. Identify and fill gaps
3. Avoid redundancy
4. Ensure equitable, accountable distribution

Immediate First Steps

1. Analyze existing relief funds and organizations
Identify which funds are legitimate, active, and appropriate.
2. Provide vetted options to the response authorities
Share names, contacts, and background on each organization to streamline messaging and donor guidance.
3. Make giving options part of official communications
Clear, centralized donation pathways reduce fraud and increase impact.

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Get Survivors What They Actually Need: Needs-based aid

- Conduct rapid needs assessments
- Use local input to guide decisions
- Maintain feedback loops to adjust distribution
- Integrate community voices to avoid cultural missteps or blind spots

Thoughtful, Respectful Branding

- Co-brand materials with local partners
- Discreet packaging for essentials (bags, kits, bottles)
- Stickers or stamps on boxes and supplies
- Flyers in key local languages with donor recognition on the reverse
- Signage at shelters and distribution sites
- Staff or volunteer apparel featuring unobtrusive logos
- QR codes linking to information about aid access and donor resources

Feedback Mechanisms

- SMS surveys
- Simple websites
- Community focus groups
- Written grievance processes
- Feedback boxes or information boards at shelters