

# **Partner Opportunities Bulletin**

## **NDRN and the American Red Cross**

### **Background**

On September 3, 2009, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) and the American Red Cross. The MOU provides a broad framework for cooperation between the organizations in rendering services to communities and assistance before, during and after disaster events in the United States.

### **Organization Information**

The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) is the nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems and Client Assistance Programs (CAP) for individuals with disabilities. Collectively, the P&A/CAP network is the largest provider of legally based advocacy services to people with disabilities in the United States. Through training and technical assistance, legal support, and legislative advocacy, the National Disability Rights Network works to create a society in which people with disabilities are afforded equality of opportunity and are able to fully participate by exercising choice and self-determination. The National Disability Rights Network serves a wide range of individuals with disabilities – including, but not limited to, those with cognitive, mental, sensory, and physical disabilities – by guarding against abuse; advocating for basic rights; and ensuring accountability in health care, education, employment, housing, transportation, and within the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

The American Red Cross is a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Red Cross provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. The Red Cross provides services to those in need regardless of citizenship, race, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status or political affiliation.

### **Benefits of Collaboration**

- NDRN and Red Cross will encourage their respective agencies and chapters to engage in collaborative discussions at the local levels to identify and prioritize joint partner activities in readiness, response and preparedness.
- Depending on the needs of the local community, the MOU suggests *several* methods of collaboration for the agencies and chapters.
- One of the most important activities of disaster response is pre-disaster planning. NDRN agencies and Red Cross chapters are encouraged to determine up front how each organization can mutually and collaboratively assist each other during a disaster response to ensure effective and timely action.
- The MOU outlines the process for shelter access by the NDRN agencies during a disaster.
- Following a disaster relief operation, chapters and agencies are encouraged to meet for an after action analysis, discuss how the operation went and improvements for the next one.

The American Red Cross and NDRN can actively seek to identify other areas within their respective organizations where cooperation and support will be mutually beneficial.

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## **For more information contact**

- National Disability Rights Network  
Website: [www.ndrn.org](http://www.ndrn.org)
- The American Red Cross at 202-303-4026 or email [NGOPartners@usa.redcross.org](mailto:NGOPartners@usa.redcross.org)  
To find your local Red Cross chapter: go to [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) – Your Local Red Cross