# 4.4 Network-Building Checklist

**Purpose**: This tool provides a summary checklist for evaluating the progress in establishing, communicating through, and sustaining a local network.

**Directions**: Tasks are organized by chapters. Network members can use this checklist as a self-test to assess progress in creating and sustaining the network through its different phases.

**Chapter 1: Gather Information**

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| **Task** | **Date Completed** | **Notes** |
| Secure leadership support. |  |  |
| Gather and share data:   * GIS maps * Demographic information |  |  |
| Identify and locate vulnerable populations and develop clear definitions for the full range of functional needs of the populations:   * People with communication barriers * People who are transportation disadvantaged or carless * People with medical needs * People who need assistance to maintain independence * Caregivers (including parents and guardians) and people who need supervision |  |  |
| Identify other government agencies, such as health, transit, and social services, already involved with vulnerable populations, including in nonemergency planning roles. |  |  |
| Identify local groups or organizations (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, residential care facilities, etc.) to invite to the planning forum to address communication with vulnerable populations. |  |  |
| Assess resources and assets for outreach to functional needs populations. Identify gaps. |  |  |
| Identify existing networks and key contacts. |  |  |
| Create a master list of CBOs/FBOs, the groups they serve, and services they provide. |  |  |

**Chapter 2: Build or Add To the Network**

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| **Task** | **Date Completed** | **Notes** |
| Plan the first meeting. |  |  |
| Manage the meeting logistics:   * Create invitations. * Plan the agenda. * Ensure accessibility of meeting facility. * Send invitations, agenda, meeting accommodation form, and other background materials to key personnel. * Identify a facilitator. * Send a reminder note. * Record meeting notes. |  |  |
| Convene and conduct the meeting. |  |  |
| Update the contact list. Identify gaps in contacts for vulnerable populations. |  |  |
| Send follow-up memos and meeting notes. |  |  |
| Determine additional network organization efforts that are needed at this stage in the process.   * Adopt network purpose. * Identify and communicate benefits of network collaboration. * Create organizational framework. * Plan for working together. * Define network goals and objectives. * Establish criteria for network participation. * Set network parameters. * Choose a name for the network. |  |  |

**Chapter 3: Communicate through the Network**

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| **Task** | **Date Completed** | **Notes** |
| Define communication procedures for the network.  Determine how to share information about the locations and needs of vulnerable populations. |  |  |
| Establish communication roles and responsibilities among network members. |  |  |
| Assess communication resources and assets in the network. When working with government agencies and community partners:   * Identify the types of communication resources they have available prior to an event. * Develop a phone tree of key people. * Develop (and test) alternative communication methods in case of Internet, phone, and/or extended power failure. |  |  |
| Assess hazards and community vulnerability. |  |  |
| Address in emergency planning the tools, methods, and channels that will be needed to communicate transportation information to vulnerable populations. |  |  |
| Test the network. |  |  |
| Use the network to communicate emergency alerts and nonemergency alerts. State clearly what network partners need to do with the message. |  |  |

**Chapter 4: Sustain the Network**

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| **Task** | **Date Completed** | **Notes** |
| Engage network members regularly.   * Convene meetings. * Plan conference calls. * Use social media. |  |  |
| Update the master list of network members at least yearly, if not quarterly. |  |  |
| Identify gaps in vulnerable populations represented in or reached through the network.   * Reach out to new partners. * Discuss the pros and cons of registries within your network and implement a decision. |  |  |
| Form agreements. |  |  |
| Equip network members to perform their roles. |  |  |
| Evaluate policies of network partners. Consider new policies or reframe existing ones to include the network activities. |  |  |
| Establish common terminology. |  |  |
| Exercise and improve the network.   * Use evaluations to identify opportunities to improve the network. * Incorporate the outcome of meetings and collaborative work into the emergency plan. * Use performance measures and tracking within the network. |  |  |
| **After an Event with Network Activation:** |  |  |
| Conduct an after-action review and debriefing soon after the event (within a week).   * Develop an After Action Report to capture lessons learned and actions that worked. * Include everyone in the operation (as well as the individuals affected by evacuation with a focus on vulnerable populations). |  |  |
| Use a facilitator in the debriefing who can:   * Ensure all issues are addressed fully and thoughtfully. * Focus on both positive and negative actions and outcomes, as well as suggested corrections. * Ensure that participants do not feel intimidated or pressured to say something or to silence themselves about events that happened. |  |  |
| Revise the emergency plan based on the debriefing and AAR (relating to vulnerable populations). Disseminate the revisions. |  |  |
| Identify and complete revised or new training needs (relating to vulnerable populations). |  |  |
| Identify and execute revised or new contacts or agreements (relating to vulnerable populations). |  |  |
| Measure how community groups are used more as a resource for outreach and evacuation of vulnerable populations. |  |  |

The checklist concept was adapted from Evacuating Populations with Special Needs: Routes to Effective Evacuation Planning Primer Series.