



Small Planet Works



Pilot Study for Business Continuity Planning (BCP) Best Practices for Small Businesses

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Prevent, Protect, Respond, Recover

Homeland Security Challenge:

There is a need to research factors that contribute to community and regional resilience. One area of interest is to better understand the critical success factors necessary for small disadvantaged, minority-owned, and women-owned business enterprises (SDM/WBEs) to become more resilient in the aftermath of an emergency or disaster. Research is needed to compare, validate, and expand the findings in the research literature with practical experiences of SDM/WBEs.

Research Project Solution:

The key objective of this research project is to develop mitigation strategies or best practices for business continuity planning (BCP) which are appropriate and effective for small disadvantaged, minority-owned, and women-owned business enterprises (SDM/WBEs). To meet this objective, a pilot study of small disadvantaged, minority-owned, and women-owned business enterprises (SDM/WBEs) in two Tennessee metropolitan areas (e.g., Memphis, TN and Nashville, TN) will be conducted. The effort will also study the impact of business disruption on M/WBEs and their ability to deliver goods and services to their prime vendor client base. Results and findings of these studies will be used to develop mitigation strategies or best practices for business continuity planning (BCP) for SDM/WBEs.

National Implications:

This research is a collaborative effort among minority business community and minority education institutions. This research project is expected to improve the synergy between Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and the SDM/WBE communities in understanding BCP from an academic research perspective and from a practical perspective. This project will also develop a pilot set of BCP best practices which can be customized or tailored for other communities throughout the nation. The project is expected to also expand the awareness of BCP and its impact on community and regional resilience.



Combined survey results from small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs) in Memphis and Nashville, TN show that more about 70% of SDBs do not have a business continuity plan in place.



The reasons SDBs give for not having a business continuity plan include lack of time, staff, and help developing the plan.

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SERRI is managed by the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security