Vision for the Hazus User Groups

The Hazus User Groups (HUGs) are an integral part of the Hazus program because they create a community for collaboration, information sharing, and support. These groups consist of individuals from public, private, and academic sectors who range in Hazus proficiency from novice to expert. Members use Hazus technology in a variety of activities to help mitigate risk from earthquakes, flooding, and wind within their community.

With so many Hazus users throughout the United States and internationally, the User Groups help users build a network and serve as a way to keep members informed and as a way to help them if they have questions or issues. Hazus User Groups area also a great way to connect with other Hazus users to see how else to utilize the tool and get the most out of it.

This document details the mission of the HUGs, the vision for the future, and how FEMA plans to implement to vision.

Mission of the Hazus User Groups

The mission is to create a collaborative and supportive space for Hazus users that helps create partnerships, encourages increased and more efficient use of Hazus, and provides opportunity to share information, while also keeping members up-to-date and providing them with information that helps them mitigate risk by using the Hazus tool for planning, preparedness, and response.

Vision -

The vision is to create independent, self-sustaining User Groups, who are the central point of the community that enables information sharing and relationship building among Hazus users, enables the sharing of best practices to ultimately improve the use of Hazus for planning and mitigation, and that helps users effectively use Hazus and make improvements to the tool for the benefit of the Hazus community.

Implementing the Vision

Members of the HUGs use Hazus often and need to know current information, hear when changes are coming, and are the ones who run into problems when using the tool. They have the experience and knowledge of the tool that can help other users, so providing ways for everyone to share information or raise issues is key to the success of Hazus. Since Hazus users use the tool so frequently, they can also bring up new ideas that can enhance the tool and continue to help Hazus grow in the future.

The Hazus outreach team is dedicated to helping the HUGs succeed and grow. By providing several different services to the User Groups, they have the power and enough resources available to them in order to grow their groups, provide relevant information to members, and take part in the success of Hazus. The list of services and level of support to User Groups can continue to grow with the help of the User Groups. Improvements and new ideas are welcome.

Below is a list of the services the outreach team provides to the HUGs:

Service	Purpose	Planned Improvement
Hazus User Group calls – National and Leaders	Update User Group members; provide different presentations on each call; give the opportunity for members to update each other and communicate	Send out questions on Hazus to leaders before Leaders calls – questions will be asked during call, leaders will be prepared to answer
HotZone Newsletter	Provide articles on Hazus-related information and activities; list	Highlight best practices and

	upcoming training courses	success stories in newsletter
LinkedIn Hazus webpage http://www.linkedin.com/groups/HAZUS-822417	Venue for users to post questions and receive answers; connect with other users and professionals	Find and post more topics of interest to members; post polls/questions to get participation from members
GovDelivery	Members sign up to receive updates and news regarding Hazus	Send out more frequent messages on topics of interest to Users; Ask Regional POCs and Leaders for upcoming activities and send those out through GovDelivery
Leaders Toolkit (new)	Help leaders start a local User Group or grow their current group; contains an email template to send to prospective members, handouts covering topics such as: connecting with the Hazus community, setting up a LinkedIn group, and requesting field training	Provide more handouts on ways to engage members; Email templates on different subjects; Distribute best practice one-pagers
Best Practices (planned)	Showcase Users who have used Hazus successfully; Give examples to other Users for future use of Hazus	Create and publish one page 'best practice' stories and distribute to Users to motivate and give ideas to other Hazus users
Working Session with Hazus Leaders at 2013 Conference (planned)	Leaders have the chance to discuss future goals, best practices within their groups, major issues, etc.	Create an opportunity for open discussion on Hazus practices, activities and goals by providing an in depth agenda; Send out questionnaire before the meeting, asking what they'd like to see in the future for Hazus – discuss ideas during meeting in order to facilitate communication and collaboration