Wonder Labs

December 15, 2020

Dear President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris,

We are deeply inspired by your recognition of a Presidential 'duty to care'. As you lead America with care, through many cascading crises, we urge you to consider implementing a *policy, people and places approach to systemic risk governance.* This will entail implementing the following priority actions, among other emerging areas:

1. **Develop a whole-of-society policy approach to reducing disaster risks, based on a systemic understanding of underlying risk drivers and cascading impacts exacerbated by climate change**.

   1.1 **Prioritize spending on mitigation, risk reduction and adaptation**. Every dollar invested in mitigation saves six in response. Commit sustained funding for communities at risk, and still recovering, from recent disasters.

   1.2 **Address the accountability gap**. Create regular opportunities for community grantees to provide feedback on policy focus areas, funding priorities and program outcomes.

   1.3 **Invest in inclusive, accessible, resilient infrastructure.** Build smarter, where and how matters. Enforce zoning and building codes. Weatherize building codes to account for increasing smoke impacts. Embed disaster risk in development costs. Invest in micro-grids.

   1.4 **Strengthen local governance mechanisms to enable community-centered disaster risk reduction**. Facilitate peer learning and mutual aid networks. Require counties to conduct annual community-wide evacuation drills.

2. **Adopt a person-centered approach to public health and well-being**, **informed by an intersectional understanding of people's unique experiences, needs and capacities for wildfire risk reduction**.

   2.1 **Develop diverse capacities and create an inclusive workforce**. Develop robust indigenous partnerships. Design opportunities for co-learning disaster risk reduction with people from diverse asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant backgrounds.

   2.2 **Prioritize funding for outreach, mitigation and risk reduction work** especially for people with disabilities, older adults, people who are low-income, living on the streets, or in resource-dependent rural and remote areas.

2.3 **Empower community-based organizations and social services** working to reduce food insecurity, housing instability and racial injustice to also engage with people's needs and capacities for disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation.

2.4 **Integrate multi-hazard awareness and preparedness in school curriculum** and project-based learning.

3. **Implement a place-based approach to disaster risk reduction, steeped in a historical understanding and informed by a longitudinal monitoring of how habitats are changing across America's diverse landscapes.**

    3.1 **Facilitate the implementation of a well-resourced prescribed burning program** across the American West. Enable private forest owners to conduct safe, effective and regular prescribed burns at scale. Develop robust partnerships including with indigenous practices.

    3.2 **Restore forests and watersheds by enabling community-centered stewardship practices and partnerships**. Protect and restore ecosystem services, especially for rural and resource-dependent communities.

    3.3 **Enable more convergence research with local institutions and community-based organizations**. Provide sustained funding for citizen-science initiatives to conduct longitudinal monitoring of habitat health, including air, soil and water quality.

    3.4 **Expand current public outreach initiatives to include child and youth-centered stewardship campaigns.** Enable children and young people to concretely contribute to national conservation and restoration goals.

We wish you the very best as you embark on this important work on behalf of all Americans.

With best regards,

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Wonder Labs catalyzes social and ecological innovations with communities on the frontlines of climate impacts.