LADDER

Local Approach to Discussion-Based Disaster Exercises and Readiness

Facilitator Guidebook

https://ladder.ca.uky.edu/

This guidebook provides facilitators and hosts with the background information for exercise preparation, conduct, evaluation, and after-action activities. This Facilitator Guidebook is intended for use by the exercise Facilitator and Host. Players should not receive a copy of this guidebook.

Acknowledgements

Did we miss something?
We will routinely update the rulebook as we receive feedback. If you have a question on content or note something confusing, please let us know.
Contact Andrea Higdon at andrea.higdon@uky.edu.

About LADDER

LADDER (Local Approach to Discussion-Based Disaster Exercises and Readiness) was designed to team Extension educators with their local emergency management personnel to engage community partners in a discussion-based exercise to improve disaster preparedness for animal issues. The LADDER tool includes a collaborative game that bridges the gap between traditional exercises. Unlike traditional discussion-based exercises, LADDER uses narrative-based problems in a fictional world to discuss resource management, promote teamwork, and aid in understanding roles and responsibilities during a disaster. The LADDER game is played over five rounds followed by a guided discussion to review the local emergency operations plan.

LADDER is aligned with the principles of adult learning gamification and FEMA's Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) exercise design.

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GETTING READY

LADDER is a low-cost, low-technology tool that offers emergency management a Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)-consistent exercise-in-a-box. The exercise includes a game as an interactive tool to engage individuals involved in disaster preparedness for animals, as well as an opportunity to discuss and review the local emergency operations plan. Depending on the needs of the jurisdiction, the game can be played with either pets or large animal scenarios.

Participant Roles and Responsibilities

The term *Participant* encompasses many groups of people, not just those playing in the exercise. Multiple roles may be performed by a single individual (e.g., facilitator and host). Participant roles and responsibilities are:

- **Facilitators.** Facilitators provide situation updates and moderate discussions. They also provide additional information or resolve questions as required.
- **Players.** Players are personnel who have an active role in discussing or performing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players discuss or initiate actions in response to the simulated emergency.
- **Note Taker.** Note Takers record key points of information during the exercise.
- **Host.** The exercise Host performs administrative and logistical support tasks before, during and after the exercise (e.g., registration, site logistics).

Facilitator Role

Facilitators collaborate with emergency managers to determine the invitee list, conduct the exercise, and coordinate the after-action review following the exercise. Facilitators guide game play and discussion to meet exercise objectives, and ensure issues are explored as thoroughly as possible within the available time.

Facilitators encourage all participants to contribute to the discussion and remind them that they are discussing hypothetical situations in a no-fault environment. Facilitators build and maintain an environment where all the participants feel comfortable speaking honestly and where differences of opinion are respected. Facilitators ensure that everyone feels included in the conversation and has an opportunity to participate. Facilitators should not lecture or dominate the discussion but rather keep conversations moving.

Exercise Structure

This activity is a discussion-based exercise led by a facilitator.

- Module 1: Interactive Gameplay
- Module 2: Guided Discussion

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Who to Invite

LADDER is played with animal planning and response partners. Once a date and venue are determined, utilize the recruitment flyer (available on LADDER website) to invite participants.

- Emergency Managers (required)
- Extension Educators
- Public Health Professionals
- Livestock Producers
- Local Government Officials
- First Responders
- Veterinarians
- Animal Control Personnel
- Shelter and Response Personnel
- and more!

Site Logistics

- Supplies:
  - Table and chairs
  - Paper and pens, if desired for note taking
  - Sign-in sheet
- Players: Two teams of 2-4 players each (4-8 players per game) seated at one table
- Exercise Time: 3-4 hours
- Lunch and refreshments, if desired

*If expecting more than 8 players, setting up more tables to play additional games concurrently is recommended. Include all teams in the post-game discussion.

Game Preparation

Prior to the day of the exercise:
- Determine which assignments will be used (pets or large animal). Equine assignments are available to supplement either group, if desired.
- Print and assemble game components for the determined animal type(s) utilizing *Appendix A: Printing Instructions.*
  - Exercise printable materials are found on the LADDER website.
  - Many documents are two-sided, so a printer with the ability to print double-sided is recommended. If you do not have access to a color printer, the documents may be printed in black and white or grayscale.
- Request that the local emergency manager brings a copy of the emergency operations plan for reference during Module 2: Guided Discussion.
- Playing the game and familiarizing yourself with the exercise ahead of the event is strongly recommended.

On the day of play, set up the game utilizing *Appendix B: Game Layout*.

GAME COMPONENTS

Coin
(not included)

RESOURCE

Resource Cards

CHAOS

Chaos Cards

Carrots (Calamity
County currency)

ASSIGNMENT

Assignment Cards

ASSIGNMENT
ASSIGNMENT
ASSIGNMENT
ASSIGNMENT
ASSIGNMENT
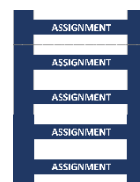
Assignment LADDER

GAME SETUP

1. Divide players into two teams (2-4 players on each team). Seat teams on opposite sides of the table.

2. Place game components on table according to *Appendix B: Game Layout Illustration.*

   - Place a coin in center of table.
   - Shuffle Assignment, Chaos, and Resource card decks and place FACE DOWN.
   - Deal each team 10 resource cards and place FACE UP to establish the initial Team Resource Inventory.
   - Distribute 200 Carrots of Calamity Currency to each team to establish team disaster funds. Place remaining currency in Community Bank.
   - Place an Assignment LADDER in front of each team.
   - Provide each player with Player Guide.

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PLAYING THE GAME

Exercise Overview

EXERCISE NAME

LADDER: Local Approach to Discussion-Based Disaster Exercises and Readiness

SCOPE

This exercise is a discussion-based game, planned for up to 4 hours. Exercise conduct focuses on resource identification and coordination in a fictional community and applying outcomes to the jurisdiction's local emergency operations plan.

MISSION AREA(S)

Protection and Response

CORE CAPABILITIES

Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Planning

OBJECTIVES

Exercise objectives are designed to bring relevant partners together to identify ways to meet animal needs during disasters. The objectives are as follows:

1. Teams compete to acquire and apply resources to resolve five animal needs assignments following game rules.

2. Players review their local plans, policies, and procedures using three game assignments.

THREAT OR HAZARD

All hazards.

SCENARIO

Calamity County suffers from frequent disasters. Teams identify and utilize resources to meet assignment needs.

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General Information

AGENDA

30 minutes	Welcome and Introductions
1 to 1.5 hours	Module 1: Interactive Gameplay
15 minutes	Break
1 to 1.5 hours	Module 2: Guided Discussion
30 minutes	Closing Comments

Module 1: Interactive Gameplay

Teams compete to complete their LADDER first by building their Team Resource Inventory and disaster funds to resolve assignments while trying to avoid chaos. A coin toss determines which team goes first.

When one team has completed their LADDER by resolving 5 assignments, the opposing team gets one final turn to complete their LADDER. If the opposing team is not successful, the team completing their LADDER first wins. If both teams successfully complete their LADDER, the team with the highest combined total of remaining disaster funds and resource inventory values wins. This is expected to take 1 to 1.5 hours.

Module 2: Guided Discussion

Select at least three assignments encountered during gameplay in Module 1 and facilitate a discussion to:

- Determine which plans, policies, procedures, or resources contain information to address selected assignments.
- Identify contact information for each resource (phone number and/or address) to address selected assignments.
- Verify memorandums of understanding, contracts or agreements are current and accurate to address selected assignments.

In the emergency management world, a guided discussion, commonly called a hotwash, is a facilitated discussion held immediately following an exercise with participants. The discussion is designed to capture feedback about issues, concerns, or proposed improvements. This will help identify next steps for the after-action and improvement planning process. Select from the list of questions below (or create your own) that are most beneficial to the community to expand and strengthen community preparedness. Frame the questions in the context of the scenarios presented in the game. This is expected to take 1 to 1.5 hours.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What other exercises should we conduct to improve preparedness?

2. What renovations/new construction is required to best meet animal needs in our community?

3. What sources of funding should we apply for to improve our plan?

4. How do we educate our community to improve individual and business preparedness?

5. Does the plan identify equipment and supplies that may be needed to operate each animal shelter, as well as supplies that owners may bring with them?

6. Does the plan provide for acceptance of donated resources (e.g., food, bedding, containers)?

7. Does the plan provide for the acquisition, storage, and security of food and water supplies? Does the plan provide for the diverse dietary needs of animals?

8. Does the plan recommend just-in-time training for spontaneous volunteers?

9. Does the plan have or refer to an MOA/MOU or MAA that defines the roles and responsibilities of each organization?

10. Does the plan describe the partnership between the jurisdiction's emergency management agency, the animal control authority, the mass care provider(s), and the owner of each proposed animal sheltering facility?

11. Does the plan address how animals are provided with evacuation assistance are registered, documented, tracked, and reunited with their owners if they are separated during assisted evacuations?

12. Does the plan identify the agency responsible for coordinating shelter operations?

13. Does the plan provide guidance about utility provisions, such as running water, adequate lighting, proper ventilation, electricity, and backup power, at animal shelters?

14. Has your community planned for liability in the event of injury/disease transmission or other health risks to staff or volunteers by an animal in their care?

15. Does the plan provide for communication of public information regarding shelter-in-place accommodation of animals, if available?

16. Does the plan provide mechanisms for continually updating public statements on shelter capacity and availability as people/animals are coming to shelters?

17. Does the plan address the evacuation and transportation of animals?

18. Does the plan identify adequately address the needs of service animals and their owners?

19. Does the plan include identification and reunification criteria for sheltered animals?

20. Does the plan identify equipment and supplies needed to operate each shelter or supplies that may need to be provided to individuals who shelter-in-place?

21. Does the plan provide for the physical security of each animal facility including perimeter control and security personnel?

22. Does the plan provide for technical consultations with veterinarians or veterinarian technicians as official responders?

23. Do agencies identified in plan have the authority to conduct the duties or activities listed?

24. Does an updated emergency response information list (ERIL) exist?

AFTER ACTION REPORT/IMPROVEMENT PLAN

A LADDER AAR/IP customizable template is available on the LADDER website.

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APPENDIX A: Printing Instructions

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Pet:

Exercise Material	Print Quantity	Single or Double-Sided	Special Instructions
Pet Resource Cards	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Pet Chaos Cards	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Pet Assignment Cards	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Calamity Currency	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Assignment LADDER	1	Single	NA
Player Guide	1 per participant	Double	Print: Flip on short edge
Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG) (editable template)	1	Double	
AAR/IP (editable template)	1	Double	
Participant feedback form	1 per participant	Double	

Large Animal:

Exercise Material	Print Quantity	Single or Double-Sided	Special Instructions
Large Animal Resource Cards	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Large Animal Chaos Cards	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Large Animal Assignment Cards	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Calamity Currency	1	Double	Cut apart, Print: flip on long edge
Assignment LADDER	1	Single	NA
Player Guide	1 per participant	Double	Print: Flip on short edge
Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG) (editable template)	1	Double	
AAR/IP (editable template)	1	Double	
Participant feedback form	1 per participant	Double	

APPENDIX B: Game Layout Illustration

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