Recently we had a conversation with the new President & CEO of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh (ULGP) to gain perspective on the impact of disasters on the Black communities in the areas that they serve.

What is your perspective on disasters and how Black People are impacted?

The unfortunate reality is that Black People are disproportionately affected by disasters because they are marginalized communities that often do not have the resources to prepare for events that can impact them. During hurricanes, flooding, or other natural disasters, there may be a lack of infrastructure, transportation, and access to healthcare and basic necessities.

What are some examples of disasters that disproportionately impact the Black communities?

Disasters such as hurricanes, flooding, and social determinants of health are examples of events that disproportionately impact the Black communities. These events often result in fatalities, additional expenses, lack of access to proper healthcare services, and exposure to pollutants that can cause sickness or death.

What can Black communities do to prepare for disasters?

There are several things that Black communities can do to prepare for disasters. First, they can educate themselves about the types of hazards that are most likely to impact their area. Second, they can create an emergency plan that includes evacuation routes and shelter options. Third, they can ensure that they have access to necessary supplies such as water, food, and medical supplies. Fourth, they can stay informed about disaster-related news and updates through local officials, community leaders, and reputable sources.

How can Black communities access emergency resources?

Emergency resources such as shelters, food banks, and healthcare facilities may not be adequately equipped to serve the needs of Black communities. It is important for these communities to stay informed about the resources that are available and to make sure that they have easy access to them during a disaster.

What advice do you have for Black communities on how to prepare for disasters?

It is important for Black communities to take a proactive approach to disaster preparedness. This includes creating an emergency plan, staying informed about disaster-related news and updates, and accessing disaster-related resources. It is also important to stay in touch with local and national officials who are responsible for providing emergency resources.

The preparedness stage is critical to ensuring that all communities are able to respond to disasters effectively.

Do you have any final thoughts on how Black communities can prepare for disasters?

It is important for Black communities to stay informed about disaster-related news and updates and to access disaster-related resources. It is also important to stay in touch with local and national officials who are responsible for providing emergency resources. With a proper understanding of the disaster, we can prepare for the future, providing an opportunity for our communities to flourish.