

Calculating a more holistic burden estimate

Prototyping a new way to measure and target administrative burden.

Collaborating agencies:
DHS (FEMA), HUD, SBA, GSA

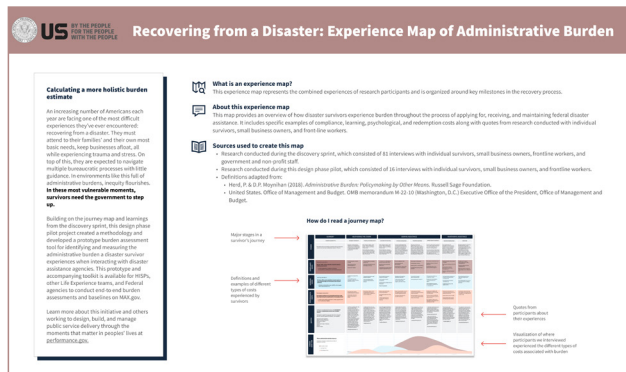
Foundation:
Discovery Research & Life Experience Charter

“Administrative burden” refers to the costs of interacting with the government, such as time, money, and psychological stress. Typically, agency burden estimates are limited to the time it takes to complete a form, which doesn’t capture all of the effort and resources an individual might expend to navigate a government service.

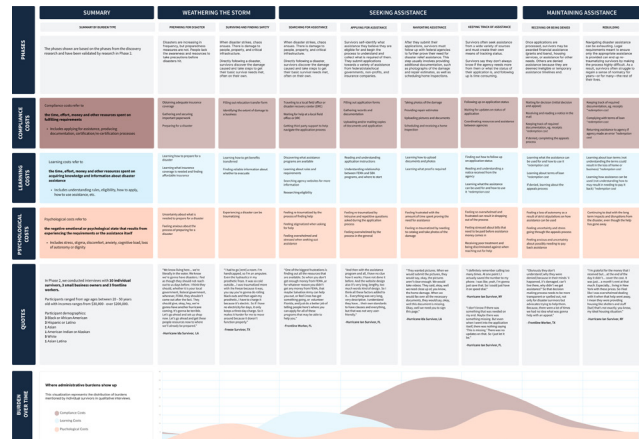
The team developed a *Holistic Burden Assessment* process and prototype tool that uses a customer-centric perspective to learn, categorize, and measure burden across the entire customer journey, including aspects of psychological, learning, compliance, and redemption costs. The team reviewed existing models used worldwide and adapted these practices for use by Federal agencies. The team has initially tested the process and a calculator prototype to assess experiences of disaster survivors and small businesses; however, the calculations are incomplete until the team has more data and time to work with agency experts in the field.

“I mean, every time I turned around, even within the same application...they ask you the same thing...couldn’t this be streamlined? I mean, how many times did I have to put in my name? How many times did I have to put in my address?”

-HURRICANE SURVIVOR AND SMALL BUSINESS OWNER







Experience map of administrative burden when recovering from a disaster



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DESIGN PHASE MILESTONES

Milestone	Status	Notes
Collected program data from across agencies for core disaster assistance services.		Completed. The team has refined customer journey maps for the process of applying for FEMA Individual Assistance and SBA's Disaster Loan Program. Next, the team will analyze and measure each step in the process with subject matter experts (SMEs) from each agency.
Conduct burden analysis through user research and quantitative analysis.		In progress. The timing changed from FY 2023 Q4 to FY 2024 Q3. The project team has developed a methodology and built a prototype tool to conduct holistic burden assessments.
Build the end-to-end summary and burden calculator for receiving Federal disaster assistance.		In progress. The timing changed from FY 2023 Q3 to FY 2024 Q3. The project team has developed a methodology and built a prototype tool to conduct holistic burden assessments.
Validate findings with stakeholders and subject matter experts.		In progress. The timing changed from FY 2023 Q4 to FY 2024 Q3. In addition to getting feedback from agency partners, the project team has also tested the approach and the prototype initially with other High Impact Service Providers (HISPs) and SMEs, including academics and other government teams focusing on measuring burden.

DESIGN PHASE PROJECT MEASURES

Design Phase Measure	Assessment Approach & Data	December 2023 Status
NEW: The burden assessment tool is easy to use.	Focus groups with frontline staff from FEMA and SBA's disaster loan program.	The team learned the tool is too complex because it requires data that is time consuming and difficult to gather, and will continue development of the tool.
NEW: Staff adopt the methodology.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
The developed methodology generates an accurate and verified calculation of the customer experience.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
Federal teams tackling more integrated assistance experience and improvement of forms for assistance utilize the resulting calculation to pinpoint targeted improvements.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.
Adoption of the methodology by other Life Experience and HISP teams to create a holistic estimation of burden.	To be determined.	Too early to assess.

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Project Summary

The project will define and blueprint an end-to-end view of the effort required of disaster survivors and small business owners to apply for, maintain, and receive Federal disaster assistance benefits. The burden estimate provides a baseline measure to calculate the impact of improvement efforts. The project will also support government-wide CX efforts by piloting a burden baseline methodology/calculator.

Customer pain point:

Disaster survivors often have a limited understanding of what to expect when seeking government disaster support and all that is required to apply for, maintain, and receive assistance. A survivor's access to assistance depends on how much time they can spend seeking it. Traveling to Disaster Recovery Centers and other sites can be costly and time-consuming for some people. Often, when a survivor cannot afford to take time off work, seeking assistance is delayed or never initiated. Survivors may have to expend considerable effort to maintain their eligibility for assistance and ensure they receive full assistance.

Project Objectives

The project will create a method for calculating end-to-end burden using a uniform baseline methodology to capture psychological, learning, and time costs. High Impact Service Providers (HISPs) and agencies can utilize the example and toolkit for their burden assessments and to measure improvements and cost savings.

Target milestones in 2023 include:

- Collect program data from across agencies for core disaster assistance services
- Conduct burden analysis through user research and quantitative analysis

- Validate findings with stakeholders and subject matter experts
- Build the end-to-end summary and burden calculator for receiving Federal disaster assistance

Primary deliverables in 2023 include:

- End-to-end burden calculations and measures for Federal disaster assistance, with specific points of high burden for priority opportunities to tackle through integrated disaster assistance efforts and improvement of forms
- Toolkit for HISPs, other Life Experience teams, and Federal agencies to conduct end-to-end burden assessments and baselines

Measures of Success

Key outcomes:

Federal agencies and delivery partners involved in disaster recovery utilize the burden baseline toolkit for service improvements. HISPs, other Life Experience teams, or Federal agencies use the toolkit to understand customer experience burden baselines.

Design phase project measures:

- The developed methodology generates an accurate and verified calculation of the customer experience
- Federal teams tackling more integrated assistance experience and improvement of forms for assistance utilize the resulting calculation to pinpoint targeted improvements
- Adoption of the methodology by other Life Experience and HISP teams to create a holistic estimation of burden