

John Cooper, Ph.D. is a Program Director at MDC Inc., where he directs a \$2.5 million FEMA supported effort to understand barriers to increased emergency awareness and preparedness in disadvantaged communities. Prior to joining MDC, he spent five years with the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCDEM) as a planning specialist and Hazard Mitigation Grant Development Coordinator. As HMGP Coordinator, he assisted the development of \$100 million in mitigation projects after Hurricane Fran (1996) and advised local governments in the preparation of plans for compliance with state and federal mitigation planning requirements. In 1999, after Hurricane Floyd destroyed the historically Black town of Princeville, the Director of the NCDEM appointed Cooper liaison to President Clinton's Committee for the Redevelopment of Princeville and the Princeville Redevelopment Planning Team.

In 2007, Dr. Cooper advised the design and implementation of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation's Emergency Preparedness Grant Program, which focused on special needs populations. In 2008, he served as chair of the Mitigation Committee for the NCDEM's Disabled and Elderly in Emergency Management initiative. Currently, Dr. Cooper is a Visiting Lecturer in the Department of City and Regional Planning (DCRP) at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill (UNC) and a member of the Advisory Board for the new DHS Center of Excellence - Natural Disasters, Coastal Infrastructure, and Emergency Management (DIEM). He has written about the extent to which local plans account for the conditions, concerns, and capacities of disadvantaged folks and the key elements of high quality plans. Dr. Cooper earned a B.S. in Economics and Master of Urban Planning from Texas A & M University. His Ph.D. is in City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

MDC Inc. is a non-profit founded in 1967 and based in Chapel Hill, NC. MDC's mission is to help organizations and communities close the gaps that separate people from opportunity. For more information see [www.mdcinc.org](http://www.mdcinc.org)