



**American  
Red Cross**

# Hurricane Harvey

One-Year Update | August 2018



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“I was glad we had somewhere we could go,”  
René said. “The kids are safe.”

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When Harvey struck, more than **9,500 American Red Cross disaster workers** from across the U.S.—**over 90 percent volunteers**—mounted a massive response to help hundreds of thousands of people in need.

They provided shelter, relief and comfort for families like René, Louisa and their three children, who fled their home in Victoria, Texas.

Above: Photo by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross. Cover: Maria Rutial Acebedo meets with Red Cross volunteer Cheryl Burton. Maria and her husband are using Red Cross recovery assistance to help pay for repairs to their home in Houston, which was heavily damaged by Hurricane Harvey. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

## A Letter from Gail McGovern, President and CEO, American Red Cross

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In late August of 2017, Hurricane Harvey devastated communities across Texas and southwest Louisiana, causing catastrophic flooding and forever changing lives. The American Red Cross and our partners brought swift aid to families coping with unimaginable losses, delivering shelter, food and comfort through the storm and beyond. And in the year since Harvey's landfall, we have stood with survivors to provide ongoing assistance as they recover and rebuild.

When I visited the George R. Brown Convention Center “mega-shelter” in Houston in the immediate aftermath of the storm, I was inspired to witness our amazing Red Cross volunteers in action. They cared for thousands of residents thoughtfully and compassionately, with designated shelter areas for meals, medical care—and even a separate space for people with pets.

In addition to the tremendous commitment of our volunteers, I was also struck by the remarkable strength of the storm's survivors. As they shared their stories with me, I met people processing a whole range of emotions—from children excited by the opportunity to play with their newfound friends in the shelter, to adults shell-shocked by Harvey's devastation. But time and again, they reassured me with their determination to put their lives back together. Their resiliency and optimism was awe-inspiring.

The help we delivered in the wake of Hurricane Harvey was the direct result of the compassion and generosity of donors across the country, who trusted the Red Cross with their support. These donations empowered our organization to provide affected individuals and families with immediate shelter, food and relief items, as well as basic health and mental health services. They also enabled the Red Cross to help families clean and repair their homes, to give emotional support to those who had been through so much, and to provide more than \$230 million in immediate financial assistance for people working to put their lives back together.

As I write this message, the Red Cross continues to help Hurricane Harvey survivors—providing additional financial assistance for households in need of recovery support and whose homes experienced major damage or were destroyed by the storm. In addition to financial assistance for the hardest-hit households, we are awarding grants to partner nonprofits working in local neighborhoods to help residents recover. And we are also supporting local recovery committees working to address unmet needs in affected communities.

Much has been done to support Hurricane Harvey survivors over the last 12 months, but there is certainly more work ahead on the road to recovery. The needs from Hurricane Harvey are still great, but thanks to the generosity of our donors and the dedication of our volunteers—the Red Cross will continue to be there to lend a helping hand. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail McGovern". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gail McGovern

## Massive Response Brings Relief and Comfort in Wake of Historic Storm

In late August 2017, as Hurricane Harvey's threat to the Texas Gulf Coast grew, the American Red Cross was already preparing for the worst. Thanks to our steadfast disaster relief supporters, we could mobilize thousands of volunteers across the country, along with pre-positioned relief supplies and equipment—like tractor-trailers loaded to support field kitchens—and more than two thirds of our fleet of emergency response vehicles.

When Harvey came ashore with powerful winds and historic rainfall that inflicted immense damage on communities across Texas and southwest Louisiana, the Red Cross was there. Disaster workers from all over the country battled treacherous conditions during one of the largest flooding disasters in U.S. history—even hitching rides through flooded Houston streets in the backs of city dump trucks—to bring sorely needed emergency aid for individuals and families facing their darkest hours.

### Shelter

For tens of thousands who evacuated as Harvey approached or who fled their homes just ahead of rising floodwaters, the simplest and most urgent need was a safe and dry place to lay their heads. The Red Cross joined government and nonprofit partners to support a huge sheltering operation, ensuring that disaster survivors had a place to stay, hot meals and access to other support from trained volunteers.

From providing cots, blankets and meals to offering basic health services and emotional support, compassionate volunteers worked around the clock to bring comfort to tens of thousands of people coping with heartbreaking losses and the trauma of dislocation.

### Food

For shelter residents—many of whom narrowly escaped flooded homes by boat, helicopter or wading through waist-high water—snacks and warm meals helped bring comfort and a small sense of normalcy in a stressful situation. And when survivors began returning to flood-ravaged communities, Red Cross emergency response vehicles visited dozens of neighborhoods with meals prepared by partners like Southern Baptist Disaster Relief to help sustain them as they assessed damage and began the arduous task of cleaning up their homes.



Top: Volunteer Juanita Casanova plays with a child whose family took refuge from Harvey at a shelter in Cuero, Texas. Photo by Chuck Haupt/American Red Cross. Bottom: Kortney, 10, and his mother, Jennifer, enjoy a hot meal at the George R. Brown Convention Center mega-shelter in Houston. Jennifer and Kortney were rescued from their home by a Coast Guard helicopter. Photo by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross



More than **414,800** overnight shelter stays provided with partners



Over **4.5 million meals and snacks** served with partners



Top: Humble, Texas, resident Terri unpacks a clean-up kit as she begins to recover from the damage caused by Hurricane Harvey. Photo by Chuck Haupt/American Red Cross. Bottom: Houston evacuee and Green Beret veteran Rodney Roland shares stories of past battles and his Hurricane Harvey experience with a Red Cross volunteer as caretaker Christine Gibson looks on. Photo by Dermot Tatlow/American Red Cross

## Relief Items

Many families who fled their homes during Harvey's record rainfall and flooding had little time to pack a bag or gather essentials. To help, the Red Cross gave them comfort kits with basic personal supplies, such as toothbrushes, hygiene items, deodorant and shampoo, as well as other essentials like diapers. And for residents facing the backbreaking task of sorting through wreckage and mucking out flood-damaged homes, we provided coolers, bug spray and cleanup supplies like rakes, shovels and buckets.

## Health Services and Emotional Support

Material supplies, such as food and relief items, mean so much to disaster survivors, but for people coping with heartbreak and loss, a warm embrace and sympathetic ear can mean even more. Trained Red Cross mental health workers were on hand in shelters to provide vital emotional support to help people cope with Harvey's aftermath. In addition, volunteer health workers provided first aid, monitored the well-being of shelter residents, and helped replace lost prescription medications or eyeglasses.

## Financial Assistance

When their lives are upended by disasters like Hurricane Harvey, families often have urgent needs—for basics like groceries, gas, clothing or help with rent or other bills. To assist with these needs, the Red Cross launched an immediate financial assistance program for severely impacted residents. And although quickly standing up the technology and infrastructure for this program presented some early challenges, the Red Cross ultimately authorized payments of \$400 each to more than 575,000 households, totaling more than \$230 million in direct financial assistance.

This help meant the world to survivors like Camille and Emilio Gandara, of Kingwood, Texas, who graciously shared their experience with us. "My husband and I are extremely grateful for the help we recently received from Red Cross," Camille wrote. "We were down to literally pennies and had no idea where food would come next."

Camille was deeply grateful to those whose generosity made this support possible. "We got seven feet of water in the apartment during the Harvey flood in the Houston area where we were living," she told us. "We both have lost our jobs and practically everything we had. Once again, we are writing to express our most profound gratitude to everyone who made that help possible."



More than **1.6 million** relief items distributed



Over **575,000** severely affected households provided with immediate financial assistance<sup>1</sup>

## After the Storm: Red Cross Recovery Program Provides Ongoing Support

When the emergency phase of our response ended, the Red Cross turned its focus to planning and delivering programs that will help people recover and address lingering community needs. One year after Hurricane Harvey's destructive slog through Texas and Louisiana, the Red Cross continues to provide recovery support.

We are working with local and state governments, nonprofit partners, faith-based organizations and community-based Long-Term Recovery Committees to provide ongoing assistance for people impacted by this devastating storm. The Red Cross plans to spend more than \$180 million to support Hurricane Harvey long-term recovery efforts. These funds will be used to provide financial assistance to households that need extra help, as well as to provide grants for community-based recovery services.

### Financial Assistance for Households

The Red Cross is providing financial assistance for severely impacted households in need of extra recovery assistance. We have reached out to thousands of FEMA-registered households whose primary homes were confirmed as suffering major damage or were destroyed. In addition, we are working with other households not registered by FEMA who have applied for Red Cross financial assistance through local disaster case management agencies.

As of August 22, 2018, the Red Cross had already approved payments of \$2,000 each to more than 20,000 households, and we continue to work with more residents every day. This assistance is helping individuals and families pay for temporary housing, make essential repairs to flood-damaged homes, replace lost appliances and furniture, and much more. We spoke to just a few of the thousands of households receiving long-term recovery assistance, who generously took the time to share their experiences.

### Amber Atkins, Houston

Amber Atkins lives in Houston with her daughters Madison, 14, and Mackenzie, 11. The family's home was severely damaged by Hurricane Harvey, and she is still addressing the many needed repairs. After the floods, she recalled that the Red Cross was a consistent



Top: Amber Atkins, Houston. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross. Bottom: Pearl Denmon, Rockport. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

presence in her neighborhood. "They came out to the neighborhood constantly and brought food...the Red Cross was [there] twice a day."

In addition to \$400 in immediate financial assistance, Amber received another \$2,000 in recovery support from the Red Cross. She used the money to help make repairs to her bathroom. "It was awesome," she said of the recovery assistance. "Thank you."

### Pearl Denmon, Rockport

Pearl Denmon, 68, worked at a nursing home and lived with her brother and son in Rockport before Harvey struck. She evacuated to San Antonio during the hurricane, and when she was able to return home, discovered that it was completely unlivable. She applied

for and received \$400 in immediate financial assistance from the Red Cross, which helped pay for urgent needs like food and bills.

Today, Pearl is living with her daughter in Corpus Christi while she figures out her next steps. Unfortunately, her insurance did not cover the flood damage to her home. In addition to seeking help from local churches with demolition and construction, she plans to apply the \$2,000 of additional Red Cross recovery assistance toward the cost of rebuilding, transportation and other needs.

“[The Red Cross] is there,” she said. “You’re on the phone with me, y’all have sent a text. I feel very grateful for the help I have received even though there’s a lot [still] to be done...I do commend the Red Cross. I really do.”

### **Benito Flores and Maria Rutial Acebedo, Houston**

Benito Flores, a long-time contractor, and his wife Maria have lived in their Houston home for 20 years. They evacuated when water was released from a city reservoir during the flooding, and their home was heavily damaged. As they were removing furniture from their



Benito Flores and Maria Rutial Acebedo, Houston. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

home, Maria told us that the Red Cross was a welcome presence in their neighborhood. “First, they were attentive to our needs. When we were taking our



### **Samantha Brown, Brookshire**

Samantha and her family live in a rural area west of Houston, in a home that has been in her family for generations. During Harvey, the house was badly damaged by flooding from a nearby creek. As part of the repairs, the structure had to be elevated two feet. The porch and interior of the home also needed major fixes.

In the aftermath of the storm, the family struggled to find the funds needed for the long list of repairs. “At the time things were real slow for us because of the flooding and my husband—the hours were cut back on his job,” she said. “We didn’t have extra money to buy materials and stuff, so that money, it helped a lot and I am truly grateful for it.”

The Browns used the \$2,000 in recovery assistance they received from the Red Cross to buy sheetrock for their home. “Everybody was nice; they went above and beyond, because I didn’t expect this much help,” Samantha said.

Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

damaged belongings out, they provided breakfast, lunch and dinner,” she said.

Fortunately, Benito has been able to do much of the repair work himself, but he still needs to invest thousands of dollars to make his house livable. “We are still in need because we can’t live in our place,” Maria explained. “We lost everything.” The couple plans to use their \$2,000 of Red Cross recovery assistance to help pay for needed repairs to their home.

### **Amanda Garrison, Beaumont**

Amanda Garrison and her family are no strangers to hurricane damage. “[Hurricane] Rita destroyed our house,” she told us. “This is the second time we’ve rebuilt.”

Flooding from Harvey inundated her home, causing massive damage to the structure and the family’s personal belongings. Like many other impacted residents, Amanda first remembers how the Red Cross was in her community after the storm had passed. “We all got food every day, because we couldn’t cook,” she recalled. “So y’all fed us.”

Today, Amanda is still working to take care of the many repairs her home needs. She put the \$2,000 from the Red Cross toward repairing her bathroom. “We had a great experience [with the Red Cross],” she said.

### **Peter Lin and Annie Wang, Katy**

Born in China, Peter and Annie relocated to Katy, just west of Houston, and planned to retire there. During the hurricane, the couple and their three children were rescued by boat, along with their neighbors. “Looking back and seeing our home underwater... was a horrible feeling,” Peter said. “Everything that we have worked so hard for was gone.”

The family lost 30 years’ worth of personal property, and Annie suffered a mild paralysis in the right side of her face as a result of the disaster. A year after Harvey, they still need to invest a lot of money in repairs to their home, including a new roof, flooring and more. “We are so grateful to the American Red Cross for providing us with assistance to help us recover from this unfortunate event,” Peter said. “We have been able to use these funds towards rebuilding our house.”



Top: Amanda Garrison, Beaumont. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross. Bottom: Peter Lin and Annie Wang, Katy. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

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Peter Lin

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## Community Grants

The Red Cross is also supporting community-based recovery through strategic grants to nonprofit organizations with a strong track record of providing vital services. We have already awarded grants to several nonprofit partners, including Operation HOPE, LISC (Local Initiatives Support Coalition), Lone Star Legal Aid and Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota for Camp Noah. These partners are working to help Houston and other impacted communities in the Gulf Coast put the pieces back together in the staggering wake of Hurricane Harvey.

Operation HOPE teams are helping survivors address credit issues, develop emergency budgets, communicate with creditors, obtain SBA loans, prevent foreclosure and prepare for the future. Meanwhile LISC, the nation's largest community development support organization, is helping affected residents remove mold and complete housing repairs so they can return to safe and habitable homes.

Lone Star Legal Aid will assist hundreds more Harvey-affected households, in addition to sharing legal advocacy information in local workshops. And Camp Noah will provide children in disaster-affected communities with a safe, caring and fun environment to build resiliency skills. Red Cross funding will allow for 15 additional Camp Noah events, as well as after-school and week-long school break camps for children in 58 Texas counties.

In addition, the Red Cross is supporting Long-Term Recovery Committees across the affected region. These committees bring together local governments, businesses and other community stakeholders to address unmet recovery needs. All told, we plan to award more than \$50 million through our Hurricane Harvey Recovery Grants Program to fund community-based recovery services across all hurricane-damaged counties in the Texas Gulf Coast.



Photo by Chuck Haupt/American Red Cross

## Compassionate Supporters Fund Relief and Recovery for Harvey Survivors

None of our response or recovery assistance would be possible without the extraordinary support of our donors. The Red Cross has raised \$522.7 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to help Hurricane Harvey survivors in Texas and Louisiana. As of August 22, 2018, the Red Cross had already programmed approximately \$403.1 million

on emergency relief and recovery efforts for people affected by Hurricane Harvey. The remaining funds will be used to help with unmet needs for individuals and families impacted by Hurricane Harvey, as well as to expand longer-term community-based recovery services in the affected areas.

# Your Help Made a Real Difference

The extraordinary generosity of the public helped hundreds of thousands in need after Hurricane Harvey.



## Hurricane Harvey Expenses and Commitments (in millions): \$403.1M

As of August 22, 2018 (\$522.7M raised)

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Immediate Financial Assistance	Individual and Community Recovery	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$26.6	\$0.2	\$230.1	\$54.2	\$311.1	77.2%
Long-term recovery disbursements on grants to help meet unmet needs*	0	0	0	\$19.7	\$19.7	4.9%
Deployment and maintenance of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$12.4	\$3.1	\$0.6	\$0.4	\$16.5	4.1%
IT, communications and call centers	\$1.4	0	\$3.9	\$0.3	\$5.6	1.4%
Temporary disaster employees and long-term recovery hires	\$0.9	\$0.1	\$1.2	\$2.1	\$4.3	1.1%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$4.2	0	0	0	\$4.2	1.0%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$2.5	0	0	0	\$2.5	0.6%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$1.3	0	0	0	\$1.3	0.3%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$0.5	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$1.0	0.2%
Financial institution vendor services	0	0	\$0.7	0	\$0.7	0.2%
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$49.8</b>	<b>\$3.5</b>	<b>\$236.7</b>	<b>\$76.9</b>	<b>\$366.9</b>	<b>91.0%</b>
Management, general and fundraising**					\$36.2	9.0%
<b>Total Spent and Committed</b>					<b>\$403.1</b>	<b>100%</b>
Program Dollars Remaining					\$108.8	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied					\$10.8	
<b>Total Budget</b>					<b>\$522.7</b>	

\*Additional dollars remaining to be disbursed on grants already signed: \$42.2 million. Does not include partner organizations' administrative costs related to the grant, which are approximately 1-3 percent of the awarded amount. These costs are reflected in the management, general and fundraising rows.

\*\*Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support our more than 20,000 employees and approximately 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. 91 cents of every dollar received for Hurricane Harvey will be spent on our services to people affected by Hurricane Harvey.

*Thank you!*

The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of nearly 64,000 disasters per year—including single-family or apartment home fires, severe weather, floods and wildfires. Those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us right after the disaster and through their recovery. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. We are grateful for your trust.



To learn more about Red Cross response and recovery efforts to help Hurricane Harvey survivors, visit [redcross.org/harvey](http://redcross.org/harvey).



**American  
Red Cross**

#### **Mission**

The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.