

# Disaster Update: Fiscal Year 2021

(JULY 1, 2020 — JUNE 30, 2021)



**American  
Red Cross**

# Delivering Help and Hope Through an Unprecedented Year

## A message from the senior vice presidents, American Red Cross Disaster Services and International Services

In our 2021 fiscal year (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021), we saw communities grapple with the twin challenges of a persistent global pandemic and the impacts of climate change. Through this unprecedented time, thousands of committed American Red Cross volunteers and employees remained focused on our humanitarian mission — both here in the U.S. and around the world — to provide critical support in the wake of disasters large and small.

Our role in disaster preparedness, relief and recovery has never been more important, as changes in our climate lead to more frequent and more severe natural disasters here in the U.S. and overseas — resulting in a near-constant state of response to large disasters and multiple deployments for many Red Crossers. Thanks to their unmatched dedication — and the compassionate support of generous donors who make critical investments in our Disaster Relief and International Services — neighbors down the street, across the country and around the world could continue to rely on the Red Cross for relief and comfort in their darkest hours.

Here at home, we also helped individuals and families become better prepared for emergencies of all kinds through disaster preparedness efforts like our Home Fire Campaign, youth-focused programs and our suite of mobile apps. We also continued to support work around the globe to expand the response capacity of our partner Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and advance critical disaster risk-reduction initiatives that help communities become more resilient in a rapidly changing world.

Finally, dedicated Red Cross disaster workers once again met the evolving challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the U.S., we continued to adapt our services to protect the health and safety of disaster survivors as the situation on the ground changed. Overseas, Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers delivered ongoing critical aid to communities impacted by this coronavirus, and the American Red Cross provided financial, logistical and technical support for many of these efforts.

Words can hardly express our profound gratitude to the steadfast donors who enable our vital mission. Because of you, tens of thousands of Red Cross employees and volunteers are equipped with the know-how, equipment and technological infrastructure to turn heartbreak into hope in the wake of devastating events — and are able to stand with survivors to help them recover and rebuild their lives. On behalf of those we serve, thank you.



**Trevor Rigger**  
Disaster Services



**Koby Langley**  
International Services

# Responding to Ceaseless Disasters Amid a Global Pandemic

In fiscal year 2021, generous donors and dedicated volunteers helped the Red Cross bring relief to individuals and families in need across the country. This vital aid brought hope in times of darkness for people like Myla Eldredge and her family, who were sheltered by the Red Cross in Federal Way, Washington, after being forced from their home by the Sumner Grade Wildfire.

“Talking to the Red Cross and finding out what our next steps were was really helpful,” she said, “because we really didn’t know what to do.”

The Eldredges were among tens of thousands of people who relied on the Red Cross for emergency relief during a year of extraordinary disasters, such as unprecedented wildfires across the West, a devastating derecho storm in the Midwest and repeated hurricane landfalls that battered the Gulf Coast through the fall of 2020.

Winter brought record-breaking cold across several states, including Texas, where power failures left millions of residents unable to heat their homes or prepare food. Then, spring 2021 saw thousands turning to the Red Cross when powerful tornadoes ripped through the South and flooding from severe storms inundated communities in Kentucky.



In Ohatchee, Alabama, Red Cross disaster workers provide much needed supplies for residents impacted by devastating spring tornadoes. Photo by Jaka Vinšek/American Red Cross

As extreme weather events like these become more frequent, the human toll will increase and the poorest and most vulnerable — who are disproportionately impacted by disasters — will suffer the most. Though we help everyone equally, 61% of our clients have household incomes below \$30,000, and 25% below \$10,000. For these families, our free services and financial assistance are critical. They can keep people from ending up homeless and even save lives.

## Addressing the Ongoing Challenges of COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic wore on, generous donors helped the Red Cross provide essential resources like personal protective equipment, thermometers, cleaning supplies and more to ensure the safety of our workers and those affected by disasters. We also continue to adapt our services in order to safely aid impacted communities, including:

- Prioritizing individual hotel rooms over emergency shelters when possible to allow for social distancing.
- Providing some services like recovery planning support virtually to limit in-person contact.
- Distributing meals and relief items like cleanup kits at pick-up sites, where people stay in their cars to avoid standing in crowds.

The Red Cross also supported local partners to address urgent COVID-19 needs in communities — to the extent that resources have allowed. This has included supporting quarantine shelters, distributing food to vulnerable residents and supporting health and mental health outreach services.

## U.S. Disaster Response Highlights



Over **1.5 million** overnight shelter and hotel stays provided.



Over **3.7 million** meals and snacks served with partners.



Over **611,000** relief items distributed.



Nearly **191,000** individual care contacts made to support health, mental health, spiritual care and disability needs.



Over **32,300** households provided with recovery assistance.

# A Year of Unprecedented Disasters

Our fiscal year 2021 saw record-breaking events devastate communities across the country. The Red Cross started a new large disaster response<sup>1</sup> nearly every day, delivering relief across the country for those displaced, vulnerable and in need of support. With more frequent and intense weather events, donor pre-investments in Disaster Relief are more critical than ever to meet expanding needs.

## Derecho Storm

A rare and extremely powerful derecho — lines of severe storms — swept through the Midwest in August 2020, with peak gusts of 114 mph. It caused \$11 billion in damage, the single costliest thunderstorm event in U.S. history. Here, sisters Tricia and Claudia Phillip describe how the storms damaged their apartment community in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.



Photo by Dennis Drenner/American Red Cross

## Hurricanes

A relentless Atlantic hurricane season produced 30 named storms — the most ever recorded and more than two-and-a-half times the annual average. Five of them made landfall in Louisiana, setting the state record for the most strikes in a single season. Here, Red Cross worker Michele Grady hands out meals at a drive-thru distribution site for families affected by Hurricane Laura in Lake Charles, Louisiana.



Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

<sup>1</sup>"Large disasters" includes Level 2+ domestic disaster operations, each costing \$10,000+.



Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

## Wildfires

Dry conditions and strong winds fueled historic western blazes. California and Colorado each experienced their largest wildfires on record in 2020. In total, over 10 million acres burned nationwide — an area larger than Maryland and twice the acreage of the previous year. Pictured, Sabrina Kelly of Gates, Oregon speaks with Red Cross volunteer Eric Carmichael amid the ashes of her home, which was consumed by a wildfire.



Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

## Winter Storms

The costliest winter and ice storms on record paralyzed much of the nation in February 2021, causing power and water outages for millions from coast to coast and crippling Texas. Thousands of Texas residents — like Houston resident Anthony Ray Zachary — were provided with a safe and warm place to stay by the Red Cross and our partners.

# Responding to Tens of Thousands of Home Fires and Other Emergencies

Large-scale disasters make up a fraction of our disaster responses. In addition to attention-grabbing crises like wildfires and hurricanes, last year we provided support following tens of thousands of smaller natural disasters, accidents and man-made emergencies. This included the nation's most prevalent disaster — home fires.

Red Cross volunteer disaster teams responded to more than 60,000 home fires during our 2021 fiscal year — each a potentially life-changing event for those involved. Due to COVID-19 concerns, we modified our response procedures, enabling Red Cross responders to connect virtually when possible with those impacted by home fires.

**“I thought I'd be alone. The Red Cross assistance really comforted me.”**

home fire survivor Mykela Lane

Whether virtually or in-person, the Red Cross offered home fire survivors relief and comfort, including assistance with lost eyeglasses, medications and medical equipment as well as mental health and spiritual care. We also provided financial

assistance for pressing needs like food and clothing and helped them find a safe place to stay. We then stayed in touch virtually, working with home fire survivors to help them get back on their feet.

Mykela Lane, of Riverview, Michigan, saw the importance of this work first-hand. The 20-year-old nursing student lost everything in an apartment fire, including her books and laptop. Red Cross assistance offered reassurance during a difficult time.

“I met with the Red Cross every day,” she said. “They provided me with money for clothes, a hotel room and lunch and dinner. I thought I'd be alone. The Red Cross assistance really comforted me.”

## Our Home Fire Campaign Continued to Save Lives

For years, Home Fire Campaign volunteers have joined fire departments and community groups at *Sound the Alarm* events all over the U.S., visiting homes to provide free smoke alarms, conduct fire prevention and safety education, and help families make an escape plan.

In fiscal year 2021, this work differed due to COVID-19, but our outreach and education efforts



Red Cross volunteer Jessica Cappelletti shows Rochester, New York, resident Tina Mercendetti how to test smoke alarms during our 2021 *Sound the Alarm* day of action. Photo by Marko Kokic/American Red Cross

continued with partners like local fire departments. And last spring, we resumed some *Sound the Alarm* activities, meeting residents by appointment on front porches or lawns to share fire safety information and providing smoke alarms that were installed by local fire departments.

Even though this pandemic continued to limit some aspects of our work, our Home Fire Campaign — launched in October 2014 — still had a lifesaving impact. In fact, an additional 137 lives were saved in fiscal year 2021, bringing the total for the campaign to 916 as of June 30, 2021.

## Home Fire Campaign Highlights

Figures Cover October 2014 — June 2021



At least **916** lives saved.



Over **2.2 million** smoke alarms installed.



Over **1.7 million** children reached through home fire preparedness programs.



Over **940,000** households made safer.



Joyce Flowers and her granddaughter Ari, of Pensacola, Florida, were glad to see the Red Cross delivering meals in their neighborhood following Hurricane Sally. Photo by Jaka Vinšek/American Red Cross.

## Your Disaster Relief Investments Aid People in Need

Generous donor investments in American Red Cross Disaster Relief help us provide essential services before, during and after crises big and small. We deliver urgent support in the wake of devastating events, offer ongoing recovery assistance as survivors begin to recover and rebuild their lives, and help families and communities — particularly the most vulnerable — become better prepared and more resilient against future emergencies.

### Food, Shelter and Relief Items

After a disaster, the Red Cross works with community partners to provide hot meals, snacks and water, both at shelters and from Red Cross emergency response vehicles in affected neighborhoods. We also provide relief items like comfort kits containing personal hygiene items, as well as supplies like tarps, rakes, shovels, bleach and trash bags to help people clean up disaster-caused damage to their homes and property.

### Individual Emergency Assistance and Recovery

Red Cross caseworkers help people affected by disasters create recovery plans and identify available resources from other organizations.

When resources allow, we also provide financial assistance to help people with disaster-caused needs. Our caseworkers provide a calm, compassionate presence and consistent care, often staying in touch with disaster survivors for months to make sure their needs are addressed.

### Community Recovery

Following some disasters — such as hurricanes and wildfires — that affect entire communities, the Red Cross works with a large team of partners to help impacted residents identify and access critical recovery services. When resources allow, we may fund strategic grants to partners with specialized expertise in areas like financial counseling,

**“I appreciate you so much. This community is really in need...You’re taking up your time to help other people. Thank you.”**

Joyce Flowers, Pensacola, Florida

health and mental health care, and home repair and reconstruction, focusing on the needs of the hardest-hit and most vulnerable and underserved communities.

### Health and Emotional Support

Trained Red Cross health, mental health and spiritual care volunteers provide emotional support and basic health services, including hands-on care, health education, and assistance with replacing prescription medications and durable medical equipment or eyeglasses. They also provide comfort and aid to families who experience the disaster-caused death of a relative or other loved one and help individuals adjust to their new reality after a disaster. Expert disability integration volunteers assess our facilities, programs and services to ensure inclusion and access for the whole community. They offer support for people with access and functional needs, including those with disabilities — a community that is often disproportionately affected by disasters.

### Disaster Preparedness

Before disasters strike, the Red Cross works diligently to provide knowledge and resources that make communities ready for and more resilient in the face of emergencies of all kinds. From free mobile apps that put lifesaving tools and information in people's pockets, to our Home Fire Campaign, disaster education presentations and youth preparedness programs like the Pillowcase Project, the Red Cross works year-round to help children and families become better prepared for future crises.



We provided financial support to the Guatemalan Red Cross, Honduran Red Cross and Nicaraguan Red Cross responses to Hurricanes Eta and Iota, as well as information management and technical support to teams on the ground. Photo by Guatemalan Red Cross

## Delivering Hope Around the World

The American Red Cross empowers communities, delivers lifesaving disaster relief and risk reduction, and helps vaccinate children against measles and rubella worldwide.

### Supporting International Disaster Response

Working with 192 Red Cross and Red Crescent partners worldwide, the American Red Cross plays a central role in disaster-response efforts around

the globe. When teams request help, we send aid that may include financial assistance, trained personnel and relief supplies.

During our 2021 fiscal year, the American Red Cross and our global Red Cross partners helped people affected by 15 major emergencies around the world, including devastating flooding and landslides from Hurricanes Eta and Iota in Central America; typhoons

in the Philippines; port explosions in Lebanon; and the COVID-19 pandemic. We also helped more than 1,400 families separated by crisis and conflict reconnect through our Restoring Family Links services.

COVID-19 knows no borders, and while each Red Cross society's response to this pandemic has been different, coordinated efforts by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent



Societies (IFRC) have largely supported community-based health and hygiene promotion, access to basic services, support for containment and treatment, and fighting rumors and stigma with accurate information. As countries have increased access to vaccines, Red Cross teams are coordinating closely with government authorities to support vaccination efforts.

To strengthen this crucial work, the American Red Cross has “virtually deployed” specialists with skills in mental health, communications, information management, assessment and planning. We also funded activities like health and hygiene promotion, case detection, surveillance and contact tracing in the global fight against the coronavirus.

### Helping Communities Prepare for and Recover from Disasters

In fiscal year 2021, the American Red Cross aided communities recovering from disasters around the world — including ongoing support to people impacted by Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas.

In the hard-hit Abaco Islands, we partnered with Community Organized Relief Effort (CORE) to fund projects ranging from infrastructure improvements to helping families make home repairs through cash grants and technical guidance. Cash grants empower homeowners to decide on needed repairs, while CORE

helps with technical guidance on repairs and making homes resilient against future disasters.

“The roof was in half, and this part of the house was in shambles,” explained Abaco resident Firstina Swain, who felt overwhelmed by the extent of Dorian’s damage until she heard about the home repair grants funded by the American Red Cross. ““It was a blessing,” she added. “I don’t know how far I would’ve reached if they didn’t come in and help.”

We also supported 21 preparedness and risk reduction projects in 10 countries outside the U.S. In South Asia, we continued to work with the Bangladesh Red Crescent and IFRC to aid thousands of families who fled Rakhine state, Myanmar, and sought safety in Bangladesh. At refugee settlements in Cox’s Bazar, we helped train residents in first aid, search-and-rescue and other critical skills to help them prepare for flooding, landslides and cyclones as monsoon season began.

And in Colombia, the American Red Cross supported the Colombian Red Cross to prepare communities for volcanic activity near the Nevado del Ruiz volcano. This included helping ensure local agencies had the capacity to monitor and analyze volcano-related data, as well as helping improve coordination with government, disaster relief and community organizations in the surrounding areas.



On Sweetings Cay in the Bahamas, Amy Bruins and Carter Stone of the American Red Cross review progress on a new, elevated water tank. The project will provide more consistent water to residents of the island, which was devastated by Hurricane Dorian in 2019. Photo by Katie Wilkes/American Red Cross

Finally, American Red Cross delegations embedded with Red Cross teams around the globe pivoted existing preparedness and resiliency programs to address evolving needs from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## International Services Highlights



Over **15** major emergency responses supported internationally.



Over **1,400** families reconnected through Restoring Family Links services.



Supported **21** preparedness and risk reduction projects in 10 countries.

# Thanking Our Generous Supporters

The American Red Cross is deeply grateful to the companies, foundations, individuals, families and organizations who make annual contributions supporting our disaster work. These generous donors enable immediate and compassionate assistance for people affected by disasters and help communities become better prepared and more resilient ahead of the next crisis.

## Mission Leader — \$3,000,000+ Annual Giving\*

Amazon	Lowe's Companies, Inc.	Walmart and the Walmart Foundation	Wells Fargo
Latter-day Saint Charities	USAA		

## Annual Disaster Giving Program Members — \$1,000,000+ Annual Giving\*

Amazon	Caterpillar Foundation	The Home Depot Foundation	State Farm
American Airlines	Costco Wholesale	Latter-day Saint Charities	Truist Foundation
Anheuser-Busch Foundation	Delta Air Lines	Lilly Endowment Inc.	VSP Global
Anthem Foundation	Enterprise Rent-A-Car Foundation	Microsoft Corp.	Walmart and the Walmart Foundation
Bank of America	FedEx	Nationwide Foundation	Wells Fargo

## Annual Disaster Giving Program Members — \$500,000+ Annual Giving\*

Altria Group	General Motors	New Balance Foundation	Target
Aon	HCA Healthcare	PayPal	The TJX Companies, Inc.
Capital One	International Paper	PepsiCo Foundation	Toyota
Citi Foundation	The J.M. Smucker Company	PwC Charitable Foundation, Inc.	United Airlines
The Clorox Company	Johnson Controls Foundation	Salesforce	UPS
The Coca-Cola Foundation	The Kroger Co. Foundation	Southeastern Grocers Gives Foundation and Southeastern Grocers, home of Fresco y Más, Harveys Supermarket and Winn-Dixie	USAA
Delta Dental Community Care Foundation	LHC Group	Stanley Black & Decker	Visa Foundation
Discover	Lockheed Martin Corporation	The Starbucks Foundation	The Walt Disney Company
Edison International	Lowe's Companies, Inc.	Takeda Pharmaceutical	The Wawa Foundation
Energy Transfer/Sunoco Foundation	Merck Foundation		
Ford Motor Company Fund	Mondeléz International Foundation		
Fox Corporation			

# Thanking Our Generous Supporters

## Disaster Responder Program Members — \$250,000+ Annual Giving\*

7-Eleven Cares Foundation	The Coca-Cola Company	Kaiser Permanente	Prudential Financial
Adobe	Consumer Cellular	Kimberly-Clark Corporation	Raytheon Technologies
Alliance Data	CSX	The Kraft Heinz Company Foundation	Rodan + Fields Prescription for Change Foundation
American Express	Darden Foundation	Lenovo Foundation	Ross Stores Foundation
Ameriprise Financial, Inc.	The DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation	Liberty Mutual Insurance	Ryder System, Inc.
Assurant	Duke Energy	Marathon Petroleum Foundation, Inc.	San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
AT&T	Equitable	Mastercard	Security Finance's Lending Hand Foundation
AvalonBay Communities, Inc.	FirstEnergy Foundation	NextEra Energy, Inc.	Southwest Airlines
Avangrid Foundation	Grainger	Northrop Grumman	TD Ameritrade
The Ball Foundation	Harbor Freight Tools Foundation, LLC	Northwestern Mutual and the Northwestern Mutual Foundation	Trane Technologies
Barclays	Hewlett Packard Enterprise Foundation	Old Dominion Freight Line	U-Haul International
CarMax	HP Foundation	Procter & Gamble	U.S. Bank Foundation
Choice Hotels International	Humble Bundle		
Cisco Foundation			
CNA Insurance			

## Individual and Foundation Honor Roll — \$100,000+ Annual Giving\*

Argyros Family Foundation	The Freeman Foundation	Greg D. & Melanie S. McFarland Foundation	Schlessman Family Foundation, Inc.
The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation	Hauck Charitable Foundation	Richard King Mellon Foundation	Denise R. Sobel
Barbara Bovender	Dennis and Judy Jones Family Foundation	Libby Menefee	Spurlino Family Foundation
Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies	Jordan Family Foundation	Ken and Linda Morris	Fred and Alice Stanback
Lauren Daigle	F.M. Kirby Foundation, Inc.	Bill and Susan Oberndorf	David & Carol Van Andel Family Foundation
Linden Root Dickinson Foundation	Gerald A. & Karen A. Kolschowsky Foundation, Inc.	The Peierls Foundation	Willow Springs Charitable Trust
Dotson Charitable Fund	The Martha and Wilton Looney Foundation	William N. Pennington Foundation	Wilson Family Foundation
George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation	Malott Family Foundation	The Abra Prentice Foundation	Yabuki Family Foundation
Edwardson Family Foundation		Remillard Family Foundation, Inc.	

\*As of June 30, 2021



# THANK YOU

## You Bring Our Mission to Life

Compassionate donors power the Red Cross mission to alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies. Whether it was shelter and a hot meal for a hurricane survivor, a Red Cross caseworker offering comfort and helping a family find the resources they need to put their lives back together after a fire, or lifesaving training and preparedness skills to reduce the risk of disasters in vulnerable communities, your contributions have turned heartbreak into hope for people affected by disasters in communities here at home and around the world.



**American  
Red Cross**

Above: Pamela Harris of the Red Cross surveys Hurricane Laura's damage in Cameron Parish, Louisiana. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross

Cover Photo: Red Cross volunteer Ann Gragert hands a cleaning kit to Shyanne Peterson at a Red Cross distribution site for families affected by the 2020 Oregon wildfires, near Lyons, Oregon. Photo by Scott Dalton/American Red Cross