



Recovery Continues in Affected Communities

In March 2014, a devastating landslide in Snohomish County left destruction and heartbreak in its wake. Immediately following the disaster, more than 500 Red Cross volunteers were on hand to help survivors and first responders. They served meals and snacks, offered shelter for people with nowhere else to go, handed out thousands of comfort and relief items and provided emotional support.

Two years later, the Red Cross is still there, working with community partners to help deliver vital services in Arlington and Darrington. We are providing funding to organizations like North Counties Family Services to support grief and resiliency counseling for children; Washington State University's CLEAR program to extend emotional support for school children to reach broader community audiences; and the Arlington Community Resource Center caseworkers, who connect affected families with counseling and other available resources, including advocacy, referrals, guidance and other recovery support.

Recovering from a disaster takes time—as well as a comprehensive network of organizations and services to make sure people have the help they need. The Red Cross and our partners are supporting a “whole community” approach to recovery, where individuals, families and community organizations can actively engage in an inclusive process.



During the emergency response, Red Cross worker Jennifer Ramieh looks out on the mudslide area from the western edge of the damage in Arlington, Wash.

Response at a Glance

As of March 15, 2016, the American Red Cross response to the 2014 Washington Landslide has included:



Serving nearly **30,000** meals and snacks



Distributing more than **7,800** comfort kits and relief items



Providing nearly **9,000** health and mental health contacts



Opening more than **675** cases to help affected families

The Red Cross will continue supporting individual and community recovery and preparedness for people throughout Darrington and Arlington. Recovery is a marathon, not a sprint, and we know that recovery requires the flexibility to adapt our plans to the emerging needs of the community.

The Red Cross received approximately \$4.783 million in designated donations to assist people affected by the Washington landslide. As of March 15, 2016, the Red Cross already has spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$4.625 million—around 96 percent of designated donations—on emergency relief, recovery support and preparedness.

The work of the Red Cross in disasters is never done, as we help people, communities and organizations prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters big and small. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, the Red Cross has stood alongside Washington landslide survivors for the last two years, and we'll continue to be there in the months ahead to help people in Oso, Arlington and Darrington as they recover from this tragic event.

Meeting Recovery Needs with a Consistent, Personal Touch

Two years since the tragic landslide struck in Snohomish County, Crisann Brooks, director of family support for Lutheran Community Services Northwest, sees that the healing process, while different for everyone, is underway. Her organization has led the charge to provide much-needed support at the Arlington Community Resource Center, where grief counseling and casework have been essential resources for disaster-impacted residents.

“That support network has been huge for those who were affected; it has given them hope to move forward,” she said. With a grant from the Red Cross to support staff and operations, the Center has served more than 300 people through over 1,000 visits in 18 months.

Brooks points to the ways a resource center must operate to be effective for a community that has embarked on long-term recovery. There is a need for care, reliability, consistency and a personal touch. “When you come here, you are not just a number,” she said.

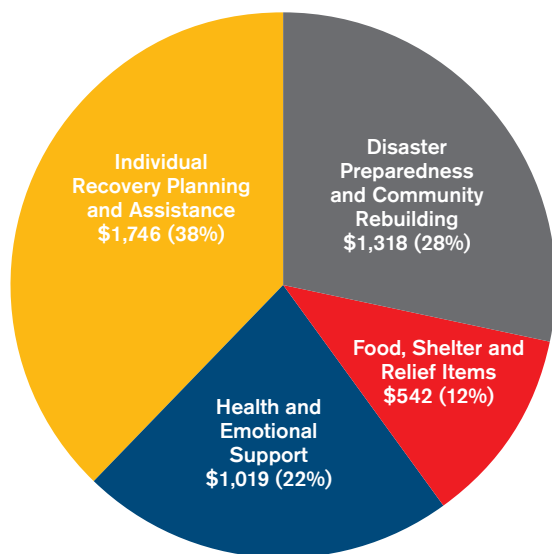
The center has been a refuge for survivors, who are often coping with unexpected emotional triggers, setbacks and crises. However, Brooks noted that the signs of recovery were most evident this last holiday season, when her clients prepared and personally delivered care packages to Eastern Washington communities that were devastated by last summer’s wildfires.

“They reached out to rally around their disaster-impacted neighbors,” Brooks said. She sees this as evidence that they are moving away from simply surviving and moving back toward living life more fully.

“You can prepare for a disaster, but emotionally you can never be prepared,” Brooks said. At a time when it was needed more than ever, an important support mechanism is in place.

Washington Landslide Expenses and Commitments*

Through March 15, 2016
 Approximately \$4.625M
 (in thousands)



Food, Shelter and Relief Items

After big and small disasters, Red Cross volunteers and staff open shelters to provide safe refuge, serve nourishing meals to residents and first responders, and hand out needed relief items such as cleaning supplies, shovels and hygiene kits. We also maintain a network of warehouses, technology and response vehicles to provide relief where it’s needed most.

Health and Emotional Support

The Red Cross cares for the basic health needs and emotional well-being of disaster survivors. Our volunteers and staff help provide services such as first aid support, replacing prescription medicines or eyeglasses, and helping people to cope.

Individual Recovery Planning and Assistance

The Red Cross helps people rebuild their lives in the aftermath of disasters of all sizes by supporting both immediate and longer-term recovery needs. This includes working one-on-one with survivors to create recovery plans, navigate paperwork, replace clothing and groceries, as well as find housing solutions, transportation assistance and other support.

Disaster Preparedness and Community Rebuilding

The Red Cross helps communities plan and prepare for disasters. This includes offering community trainings and distributing preparedness information and resources, such as smoke alarms, that can help save lives. The Red Cross also supports broader recovery initiatives to help communities meet specific disaster-caused needs, such as community rebuilding projects.

*These costs include the logistics, staff and technology expenses that make our services possible. An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs.



Kim Griffis/American Red Cross

A Commitment to Community: Tracy Franke and Megan Lucas Claim Red Cross Real Heroes Award

In December 2015, the Red Cross serving Snohomish County held its annual Real Heroes Breakfast. This year, Darrington Elementary School principal Tracy Franke and student counselor, Megan Lucas won the award and received special recognition for their Commitment to Community.

“The commitment they’ve shown to the school, the students and to the community cannot be overstated,” said Bob Dolhanyk, long-term recovery manager for the Highway 530 landslide disaster. “They were very clear, that for the community to truly heal, we had to focus on the children.”

Giving Children Coping Skills to Last a Lifetime

The Highway 530 landslide hit children in the affected communities especially hard. “I knew right away, given the issues our students face in their daily life—and now the death of two schoolmates—we were going to have to look at different strategies,” said Tracy Franke, principal of the Darrington Elementary School.

Nearly two years since the disaster, students still have to pass the collapsed mountainside each time they have to go to the city or shopping. “The trauma is reopened every time they drive through,” said Franke. “The same goes for the parents who are driving through the slide zone to get to work.”

Each of the 187 students attending Darrington Elementary School was impacted in some way by the disaster, which claimed 43 lives, but the school lacked the resources to provide emotional support to students and their teachers. The Red Cross, joined by donors like the Cascade Valley Hospital Foundation and United Way, found a meaningful way to help—school counselor Megan Lucas.

Lucas joined the staff and quickly got to work helping students begin their emotional recovery. She introduced Art with Heart, a program that allows every student to work

through grief and loss through artistic expression. The program also provided teachers with the support needed to better understand how PTSD affects children as well as the benefits of having a safe place to express their fears and feelings of loss.

“Through creativity, we are giving kids coping tools that will last a lifetime,” Lucas explained. “I feel fortunate to have gotten to see my students get stronger, more compassionate, and happier... Art with Heart helped make that happen for them.”

For parents who have witnessed their children struggle to cope, Lucas has provided a bridge to recovery. “I wanted those feelings to exit, the grief to come out,” said the parent of one child who lost a close family member in the disaster. “I wanted the healing to start.”

Megan Lucas was involved with the landslide emergency response from the start. Two years later, she remains a part of the community, playing a key role to support the emotional health of Darrington’s youth. “To be a part of that process—to know I’m able to bring resources and support for students, staff and parents—is a great feeling.”

A CLEAR Strategy for the Future

“When I go through the school hallways, some of the kids call out and say ‘Hi, Brain Lady!’” said Natalie Turner, assistant director of the Child and Family Research Unit at Washington State University.

While some students might not recall her name, few forget the lesson Turner brings to the classroom: The brain struggles when overwhelmed by stress or trauma, leading to inappropriate behavior and strained relationships, as well as compromised critical thinking and learning skills. It is important to help children and families affected cope with the ongoing trauma caused by the landslide.

The 2014 landslide disaster left a deep imprint on the children of Darrington. With initial support from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Turner and Washington State University’s Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR) program partnered with the Darrington school district to create and sustain trauma-informed environments through staff development, consultation and support.

According to Turner, children who are confronted with a traumatic event are especially vulnerable. Their neuro-development can be derailed, affecting the development of critical thinking skills and risking their ability to realize their full potential. As the Darrington community reached out for longer-term recovery assistance and healing, the Red Cross

“The CLEAR program helps teachers learn empathy and understand what’s driving the behavior of a child who has experienced extraordinary circumstances. Kids across all grade levels love the class because it’s normalizing their experience and it gives them strategies to ask for help.”

Natalie Turner, Assistant Director, Child and Family Research Unit, Washington State University.

was able to step up with additional funding, expanding CLEAR’s reach beyond the school to include families and the broader community.

“Trauma brings significant challenges, and our children are our future,” said Chuck Morrison, executive director of the Red Cross serving Snohomish County. “Surrounding them with support as they recover from the emotional wounds of the landslide disaster was paramount, for the community and for the Red Cross.”

Thank You

The Red Cross responds to an average of nearly 66,000 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 donations help us fulfill this promise, and we are grateful for your trust.