Assessing Non-Profit Organization Response and Adaptation post-Hurricane Harvey

Xochitl Hidalgo[1]
[1] Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program, The University of Oklahoma

Introduction

Hurricane Harvey (2017)

- Rapidly intensified into Cat. 4 storm before making landfall in southeastern Texas
- Flooding

  7-day precipitation totals exceeded 50 inches in some areas
- $160 billion in damage
  - 2nd costliest U.S. disaster

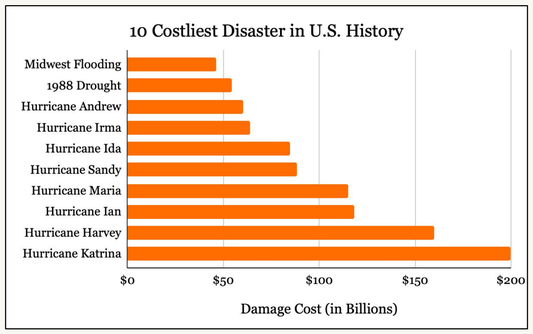


Figure 1. Damage Costs for 10 Costliest Disasters in U.S. History.

  - Greater Houston area impacted most
  - Around ⅔ of affected homes were outside FEMA's 100-yr floodplain

Methods

Target Population

- Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) operating within the Greater Houston area
  - NPOs assist government agencies in addressing unmet need during disasters

Interviews

- Six interviews conducted
  - Data collection is ongoing
- Interview questions followed 4 themes:
  - Background information
  - Immediate Impacts
  - Long Term Changes
  - Future Resilience

Preliminary Results

Deductive Codes

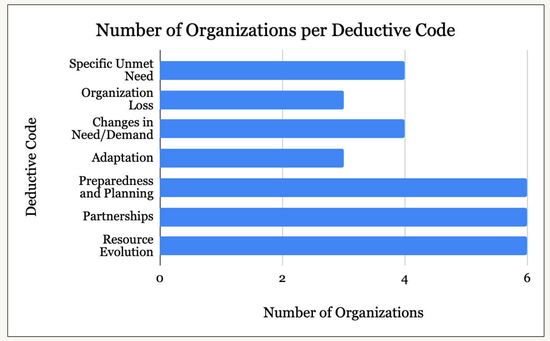


Figure 2. Number of organizations that mentioned each deductive code.

Specific Unmet Neet

"It was great the kids got toys, but what they really needed was the basics: underwear and socks. They weren't getting that."

"It did flood a lot of places… We had to close our facilities for about a week…"

Organization Loss

Changes in Demand

"So, we've had situations where we've had to step in and help, but never at this level. We had thousands of families."

"So we kind of learned who the people are in Houston that, if we really did have a need when it comes to a disaster, I've got a number of people I can just think of that I want to contact."

Partnerships

Resource Evolution

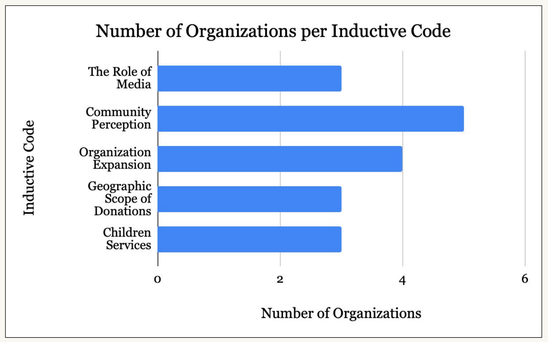
"The donations came in through a period, I would say, almost a period of 6-8 months."

"So, we now respond to sizable disasters."

Adaptation

Preparedness and Preparation

"I don't think we're prepared at all… I think we [the organization] are" … " But I think that the city, while we've done a fair number of projects… we haven't done the big things that are going to take care of it."



Inductive Codes

Figure 3. Number of organizations that mentioned each inductive code.

Preliminary Results

The Role of Media

"We put out a press release… and it was their story that helped really bring this to a national level."

"The community is very happy with the area now. Partially as a result of Harvey." … "Because they now realize: yeah, it really does work."

Community Perception

Organization Expansion

"We never did. We utilized it as a way to take us to the next level of growth." … " It allowed use to expand and broaden our capacity to serve more families."

"That 1.5 million pairs of underwear came from all over the world."

"We were getting calls from people from other states."

Geographic Scope of Donations

Children Services

"From the beginning, I was only serving children… There was a six month period that we went from only serving kids to serving everybody, and then we went back to only serving kids.

Discussion

Major Implications:

- Influx of resources lasted 6-12 months
  - Sustained organizations for several years
- Long-lasting partnerships were developed
- Media increased awareness and influenced community perception of issues

Limitations

- Limited participation
- Time elapsed since Hurricane Harvey

Conclusion

Disaster response and recovery requires a great deal of time and resources. Hurricane Harvey supplied NPOs with the resources, experience, and confidence needed to respond to future disasters, although concerns about the overall resilience of the city remain.

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