

00:00:04 Interviewer

OK, there we go. OK, great. Thank you. And Cherry, can I just get your full name and your position and the organization you work with and the does that last disaster that you were were that you experienced in your area?

00:00:21 Respondent

So my name is Cherry Wilmore. I'm from home Louisiana. I am the Co founder of Cherish Times 2 is a nonprofit that works with vulnerable health and transition vulnerable people from life transitions, particularly foster youth. And that is based off of me and my sister lived experience of growing up in the Louisiana foster care system. And then we extend to other vulnerable populations because we realized that sometimes children and young adults have not necessarily went to foster care, but it doesn't mean they didn't come from a broken home. And our last disaster that we experienced was last was that last year Hurricane Fernstein. Nope, it was 23. Was Hurricane Francine great for that last disaster that we experienced? OK. Oh, and then, well, no, we had a snow storm in January. So so we had a snow. So we had hurricane Francine in 23, but we also had, I don't know if you're familiar with our climate. We're from Louisiana, so we have record-breaking snow that haven't occurred in over 100 years. So we got what, 14 inches of snow? I.

00:01:37 Interviewer

Remember, I remember.

00:01:40 Respondent

In January so we were trapped in our houses for a week as they maneuvered cause none of us knew how to get out of it. I don't know how to drive on a regular basis so I definitely knew. I didn't know how to drive in snow so I stayed at home until they cleared the streets. So I think trucks had to come from like Alabama or Arkansas or somewhere crazy like that to help on plow us. Wow. So, yeah, so that's how many disasters we get, that it is kind of hard to keep up with them.

00:02:12 Interviewer

OK, great. Well, thank you so much. Before we get in, I just wanted to let you know that we're we're asking about disaster response activities that have been carried out by community adaptation partners and and you know, you may not know the partners. And so I just wanted to mention some groups that you may have heard in your community. The groups included the Start Corporation and the Lowlander Center. And those are some of the groups that are are affiliated with the CAT program, with the community adaptation program. And those are organizations that help with things like shelter and food supplies, translations, emotional support. And I think they both helped during Hurricane Francine. So we just wanted to get your, your, your thoughts on some of the work that organizations like these organizations like START and Lowlander Center have done during recent disasters such as Hurricane Francine or the snowstorms. And, and so I'll refer to these organizations as CAP or CAP partners during the interview. And I'm more interested in hearing your

thoughts about how you know, your awareness of the if they supported, if you're aware that they supported the community or if you're not aware that they supported the community, both are fine just to get your opinions on, you know, what happened during those disasters.

00:03:33 Respondent

I I actually am not aware of Lowlander OK and the assistance that they provided after hurricane foreseen or the snowstorm. However, I will also state, I don't know if they go like really down the Bayou, which means like the pointy chains, the John Lafitte areas, if that's the those areas that they're served and they're kind of like out while they're in my while they're in our community, they're still like an hour and a half away from us. So we're in the same parish, but it still takes like an hour and a half to get to those areas. So they may just be worked at just because of distance. I just wasn't aware because they went they ascended further than where I was at in regards to start. I do know that if some they do help with transportation, I will say that as a community member their presence is low. So while you know that start is, you know, start, you don't always see the impact of Start, if that makes any sense.

00:04:44 Interviewer

Well, that makes sense. And if there are organizations that you see that are visible in your community and particularly local organizations that are visible during disasters, if you could let us know about those organizations that you are aware of too. They may be camp partners and but they they may not be selling.

00:05:04 Respondent

OK, so I will say in my neighborhood, I do live in a predominant black neighborhood, African American, low socioeconomic heavy, also Hispanic population. So I live in a very the neighborhood, the community in which we live is one of the lower to moderate economics. It is like a neighborhood that is aging out, like you're unfortunately, your earners are moving to the higher earner. If they're you know, they're at the age range when which time my age group they're moving to a higher earning group or your elderly. So you, you you're not really ready to move to your home. So let me move out of your neighborhood. So with that being said, we have a lot of churches that come together. So you have like Mount Pergram, you have new rise, you have residents. So you have the local churches that come together and assist as what they can. I will say in hurricanes Francine, we didn't see a lot in our area outside the American Red Cross assistance. So my, our organization partnered with help, which is helping helping all people sisters and strengthen knowledge and American Red Cross and we did feeding distributions 'cause I'm not certain I did have a large area of concern. We didn't get a POD site. So you if I say POD, that's a point of distribution site, right? Right. In our neighborhood. That was a very, that was a hard area for me that we did not receive it because knowing our demographic, persons who lack transportation, lack mobility, aging population, I was not happy that the pie site was set very far and kind of out of touch and then it went to the bayous. So outside of those organizations in Hurricane Francine, I didn't see, we didn't see the lot of activity and the support to our communities.

Now overall, if you talk about our parish, you did see the starts in the lowlanders and you saw the parish and what is it? Brac Bayou region. I'm about to mess up the acronym, but it is a council that comes together to help you during after disasters. What I will say, there are not many of our leaders and community members that are on that council. And typically what happens is once a response is sent that hey, this area has been impacted by a disaster, they reach out to brag and then brag is where all the distributions and supplies are sent and it's distributed this distributed through brag. So I will say that one of the things that me and my sister want to do and if I'm talking too much, tell me. And if it's not cohesive to the to the statement, tell me as well. We want more of our community leaders on in that, in that on that council so they can be at the table, being readily given the information and the insight and being able to have a point of distribution site. I know there was discussion about manpower because you know as well as I know you do need manpower to support the distribution sites. You need people working boots on the ground, you need volunteers. So that is something that I, my sister would like this summer to get to a group of people of at least 25 to 30 who can say, hey, I will be present. I'm willing to stay behind, be present. So when a distribution site is needed to be open in our area, you can work it if you have more people as you know, and I know the work is hard. However, the more people you have, the less you feel the impact of that hard work. So that is something I've seen. So you, we've seen a lot of the faith-based organizations in that area that do a lot of work. So Catholic Charities, American Red Cross and I just some individuals popping up and saying like, I know me and my sister, you know, we had to Uber. I don't know how to drive. So I told people like there's no storm caught me out. Like that's not my ministry. I can't help you. I can't, I can't drive. I can't drive regularly. But if you can get to me, I have, we have food because I always overcook. That's something that I learned from my mother. And so here's some soup because you saw a lot of meat. It it was drawing how many people could not survive for three to four days in their home. That brought a different awareness to me because hurricanes, I think you see more mobility because it's hurricanes and kind of accustomed to it. But how many people just didn't have the supplies in the goods like toilet paper, flashlight, you know, food in your home? Because I will say, fortunately, we did not lose electricity during snowstorm. Yeah, but just did not have modern norm emergency supplies to last three to four days in your house until the Rose was clear and didn't have food. Yeah. And didn't have, you know, supplies. And so that was during. And it just reminds me of the social economics and sometimes the lack of community that we do have. Like we can rally for a hurricane. I think it's mentally in us to rally for hurricanes to help each other, but that mentality doesn't always exist when it's a different type of disaster.

00:11:09 Interviewer

Right, right. Well, thank you. That's, that's, that's a very good introduction to, you know, getting an understanding of the, the, the area that you live in. And there were two partners that you had mentioned that are actually CAP partners. And so when we're talking about CAP and CAP activities, I'm helping all people and sisters of strength and knowledge, our CAP partners. And so, so when we're talking about CAP and CAP partners, if you could sort of think about the work that you were doing with those two organizations, that's kind of

what we're interested in as well. And so our, our, what we'd like to know about is first of all, the quality of services compared to past disasters. How was your community's experience receiving help this time? Was it, you know, better or worse than you're?

00:11:59 Respondent

Much better I will say in our area, the American Red Cross did not always have the most positive light. We are an area that is deals with disasters, but we're the Bayou region and we are often connected to NOLA, to New Orleans. And so the conversation comes around that we do, we have felt in the past left out because NOLA is such a larger market is the notoriety of New Orleans, especially after Hurricane Katrina, people want to ensure New Orleans, which is 11 of more economic parts of our state is taken care of. And so by us being so linked to NOLA regionally when it comes to like third distribution and services with American Red Cross, we've we have typically felt like we couldn't rely on American Red Cross and their partners. However, the American Red Cross, I would think, kind of made a debut after hurricane idols of Hurricane Ida happen in August of 21. They were not as present, but Francine came two years later in 23 and the presence was so much more. They were boots on the ground. You saw them just distributing meals and water and coming and setting up like the court, you know, the trucks and they were plating the food. So this response and their presence, you know, they opened the shelter and they manned the shelter that we had locally. You saw the presence of the American Red Cross, the Hurricane Francine. It was, it was astounding to say that you didn't see that presence just two years later, earlier. So that difference, that stark difference of them saying, we hear you, we heard what you said after Hurricane Ida and we're going to make sure that we're different moving forward with disasters was very refreshing because many times you hear words from people, but you don't necessarily see that action. But they put that action behind them for Hurricane Francine and they were very present. Like I said, we didn't always see other parts of our parish, but you saw the American Red Cross, you saw their partners, you know, handy. No, you had to have bus going around handing out food. You had the American Red Cross. You had, you know, sisters with strength and knowledge. Me and my sister, we partnered with them to work the the shelter. That was I was an eye opener, especially the shower part. I was like, my God, I didn't realize the work I had to you but work in the shelter. So getting clothes for people who need to close, getting supplies, calling, making phone calls. They said I've wanted friends wood in villages because we was like, Hey, we heard Friendswood didn't have anyone there and they came like the next day and they set up a distribution site in Friendswood, which is Philly Jesus. And just like any of you say, like a area didn't hadn't seen nobody. They was like, OK, but we want to set up something else. And you know, we did the full like the first day by the oldest Stanley. They did a meal distribution. They gave out the the bucket. It was so much better. I said a lot, but it was just their presence and you felt the impact of them this year, this time with Hurricane Francine.

00:15:42 Interviewer

Well, thank you so much. That's that's good to hear that things improved from Ida to Francine.

00:15:49 Respondent

Yes. And it wasn't just of service, it was like acts that you can see.

00:15:54 Interviewer

OK, great, great. During hurricane Hurricane Francine, did you notice that helping old people or sisters of strength and knowledge, did you notice them working in your community? I think you work you worked with them. So I think that.

00:16:08 Respondent

They yeah, yeah, so I did and they and not just our community, they did like our community typical. They were like I said, have had that mobile, has the mobile bus. So they was going to different neighborhoods and doing meals. I think they they did red beans a couple of days. They did like different meals Spaghettt like they did Tibido like you did. You saw them sisters with strength and knowledge. You saw them in the shelter as they would add the distributions as well, but you also saw them working in the shelter. So in helping people like fill out forms like, you know, as you know, everybody needs emergency disaster stamps, so helping them get their phones, get their documents. So even start what this I start had something that so they have the I don't don't even lie, but they had an event as well off off of Magnolia. So I'm not going to say the lowlanders because I will lie to you about them. I think they've worked extend further than me than my where I'm familiar with. But start you start start they was giving out Med the mailbox, the pill boxes for the people to make sure they put their medicine together. They had like the the little pouches, like the emergency prepared, like the emergency pouches where you can how to put your your documents for the elderly. And you saw the painting those out and giving that out to people water. So it was just, it was really good to see all those different persons and communities come together. So you've seen each of them. I would say that was the most one of the most organized inequitable just distributions. Even while it wasn't like the Paris, I didn't feel like the Paris was equitable about it. But when it came down to the community partners, they were very equitable and making sure that they touched different diet, different groups of people that you not that you normally wouldn't touch that may not have been missed in the years past. So that was good to see that work.

00:18:23 Interviewer

OK, great. Thank you so much. How easy or hard was it for people in your community to get help from the partners like Sisters of Strength and knowledge helping all people start corporation? How easy or or or or difficult was it for people to go? Did people know where to to go? Were there groups that were able to to assist people more than others more easily than others?

00:18:52 Respondent

I I so start it has it has a mixed reaction just because some people have had previous experiences with them and you know, like I know sometimes people don't always give you

another chance that their experience with you then in their mind, that's going to always be their experience. So that was a mixed reaction from persons in the neighborhood where something, well, I in my opinion, they didn't even necessarily give them a chance. Once they heard, thought they were like, oh, they're not going to help you. But I was giving up the opportunity to see they were actually help just based on previous experience with them, whether they was positive or negative. Now persons who maybe had a more positive experience, they were more open to them or didn't know about them at all, they were more open. I do think that there was a, a lack of information just given to individuals and I don't think that's anything to do with the American Red Cross. So their partners, I think that came from like our parish, our parish did not, was not effective in ensuring all persons received information. And I think that that trickled down to where there was some groups that was super aware and there was other groups that wasn't aware at all of anything. And it wasn't until you like went and knocked on their doors. So that's what we do, like knock on the door to people, go to neighborhoods and communities that we're familiar with that people may forget about because they kind of like shut off. And in regards to the Hispanic community, I think the issue is like legal status. So there was they needed assistance, but they were cautious about receiving assistance just maybe due to their legal status. So I think that that was a something for that that I saw in that community. And so even me and my sister will go, they were super cautious. They'll be like, I'll take this plate, but I'm not showing up or you say you need me to show up the morning I'm going to call, I'm going to pick up. I'm sorry, that's my older sister.

00:21:14 Interviewer  
Particularly.

00:21:21 Respondent  
All right, give me one moment. All right, hold on. I'm sorry about that.

00:22:08 Interviewer  
Oh, no problem, no problem. We know you have. This is your home and.

00:22:11 Respondent  
Yeah. And as you can see, the knock, she just walked in. That's good. That's nice. That's the family we have. That's the family we have.

00:22:20 Interviewer  
To do that, that's wonderful all.

00:22:21 Respondent  
Right, thank you sis. The joys of living very close to your siblings.

00:22:32 Interviewer  
That is, yeah, that is very nice, yes. It just the support that your family provides is just so

important. Yes. And.

00:22:40 Respondent

She. No, I'm sorry. We typically don't have any limitations. We have open door policy. Yeah. And the door open and she just walked in and started talking. And then she got eggs and she wanted food. So I do apologize. Oh, and she's much older than me. So at this point, we are, we just happy she's feeling alive. So we just let her do what she wants. Yeah. Yeah. Well, what she's, what, 26 years older than me? 27. Wow. Yes. Me and my sister, foster children. So her mom fostered us. So we were raised, I will say. Well, we were raised by grandmother because our mom was born in the 30s, which is her biological mom. So she won 1930. So cool. She was 67, I think. Yeah, she's like 67. Yeah, she should be 6768 one of them. And she just comes in and out and she is the family manager and she just does what she does. Oh, that's wonderful.

00:23:40 Interviewer

That's wonderful and the fact that you're all so close together, she must have done a good job 'cause you're all close to one another and you all, you know, feel free, You all feel like you can rely on and you have support from one another. So she must have done a very good job.

00:23:54 Respondent

Yes, yes, me and my sister the ghouls now 'cause we parent them, that's.

00:23:58 Interviewer

Great.

00:24:00 Respondent

We still get all the time, but no, we are we all live within. Oh, probably the, I mean this and that's probably why I haven't moved because it is close to family. So have a niece and then my aunts and everybody just transition and we we are very close. They just come in and out. It's great. But yes, so where was?

00:24:21 Interviewer

It OK, well, I can I can sort of refresh the question. So you had you were talking about how the Hispanic community had had some issues with legal status. And so I was wondering how did the cap and cap partners, did they do a good job about reaching people who needed help the most? Were there people who were overlooked in the community during previous it's disasters that may have gotten help this time? How does? How does that compare?

00:24:57 Respondent

I think they did a better job of reaching them themselves. They did a better job of reaching your lower socioeconomic and your communities that feel left out. And typically it is that is that that group where they're not, I guess you will call them the working poor. They're not

super low where they meet the requirements for all of the services and they're not your higher earners, which have the resources to rebound, but like that middle group that works. So they don't necessarily qualify for a lot of services. So when but they don't make a lot of money. So when things happen, they don't always have like reserve funds. So I think they've done a better job of reaching that group of people and having them feel like less left out or less forgotten. I think those partners did a good job even when it came down to like the Hispanics with that caution, like they told him like hey, still go now, whether they received that information or they believed it, but they least informed them that they that it was there and present for them. And so I think that that has that has gotten better in regards to those groups of reaching that soft area of people of not the lowest low or your high high, but you're working for I guess that's how you would probably describe them.

00:26:29 Interviewer

Great. Thank you. Were the services that were offered by the CAP and CAP partners, was it a good fit for your community's needs? Was it culturally appropriate? Was how? How was the assistance that was provided?

00:26:45 Respondent

I, I think it was they had a buried persons, especially American Red Cross. What I did like about the American Red Cross is that they took people from different areas in different regions and that came into our communities to assist. And so some of them were Spanish speaking, some of them was young, some of them was older. They had varied backgrounds. And I think that when you, you know, you get to see like a little part of you, some of them was biracial or something that was multiracial. I think when you get to see those varied persons, that helps to make you at ease. And I think they've done a great job of where they didn't when they extended American Red Cross, they just, they didn't come in knowing all the answers. They just came in asking where do you need us to fit? And I think that that is really important. Even when it came to the CAP partners, I think they've done a good job because they had a lot of nurses, a lot of people with medical backgrounds like so citizens and strength has a lot of nurses in that organization. And so there was at least they were able to help out with like some of those medical needs that person, particularly that elderly population will have or making sure like they were taking their medicine on a regular basis. And particularly in Village East because they were the last people to get power back after Hurricane Francine. So to see them come out on the what when it seemed like everyone else had moved on because at this point, 96% of our area had gotten lights and utilities. We were back in school. To see them go into that area that was still in the dark, even though everybody else had moved on. They had had utilities. I think that was refreshing for them to see and to experience the American Red Cross and Hap and Tesh was there, Sisters with strength and knowledge. It was a couple of groups. I'm missing some people, so forgive me. I want to say Start was out there too, but to see them all come together to serve that community that they, they really appreciated that. And then having people drive water and supplies to them on those who couldn't make it to the to the church, particularly the elderly ones who didn't have vehicles or could no longer drive. They were very receptive of those



partners coming together and doing something just for them, particularly when it seemed like everybody else had moved on from the disaster or have recovered from the disaster. But they still they still hadn't.

00:29:25 Interviewer

That's actually one question. That's one, one question I wanted to ask. Did the CAP partners help people for a longer period of time than usual and was that difference, was that different than the disaster response operation? Were those local partners able to continue services after the disaster ended and and you know what type of services were were continued?

00:29:52 Respondent

Yes, so they they still they did distribution and that's why I'm saying like I thought that there was a typically once were like 7075% of people have power and restoration. You see that decline immediately haven't done haven't been a part of many disasters. You see the decline of places that are offering you supplies and food, but I that's why I thought was very surprising and good was that they still continue even though you had a large particularly those pockets that still was without. They were still looking out for them. They were still giving them food, giving them water, helping them sign up. I think at that time they had started FEMA applications helping them with that, helping them with disaster food stamps. We was helping them with that because fortunately for me, my twin sister, she, that's what she used to do for seven years. She worked for these two US D SNAP. So she did SNAP benefits and childcare. So she was able to help them, help the partners, like show them how to fill out the application. Some people, unfortunately, you know, they cannot read well, so read the form to them. So they did a great job this year of keeping of those pockets, helping those pockets of people even after it seemed like a disaster was over. That's when the distribution site has got stayed. So they did they they they stayed around a long time. They even went to some libraries and was helping out. Oh, that's what I forgot. They the libraries was like really big this disaster and I've never been there before the.

00:31:31 Interviewer

East Oma, the East Oma library, yes, yeah, they're a cat partner as well. Yeah, the.

00:31:36 Respondent

East home and I'm I'm so sorry, the East Oma library was like soon as they didn't go out of power this year for Francine, but like I know they was I was able to go in there and like they would help them with like everything, everything or every like your paperwork, like you're get making them copies, faxing and scanning and helping them. They, I definitely thought they was full stamp workers and female workers with their female applications, like if they got rejected, showing them how to do the appeal. So the but I E our library does a wonderful job of taking care of our disadvantaged population when it even when it comes down to like homeless and like helping them like with the shower stations, like where to go to take a shower if you need a shower where you can go and get a meal and just different things like that. Like they do a phenomenal job of Levin having a person's feel seen for who they are

and not for their situation that they are facing. So do you see that do?

00:32:50 Interviewer

You see that other libraries across Louisiana or is the East Homa library Oh.

00:32:56 Respondent

No, ma'am. Oh no, ma'am. Oh no, they don't. Probably call the law enforcement only to to get you away. I just think that that library, that staff, I want to say it's Kaylee. Is she still there? It's over that library and they do a great, to me, a great job of not hiding homeless or hiding your disenfranchised population. A lot of people, you know, we're all about the image. And so we want it to be really, really pretty. So we might have poverty, we might have situations, but we just don't want to see it. We want to be out of sight, out of mind. And so they, at other libraries, you will possibly run into the chance of having a law enforcement officer scoot you out. The, if you're causing ruckus, they, they do a better. But that library does a really good job of supporting those in need and particularly after disaster. Because unfortunately, we do live in a community where we don't have, a lot of people don't have personal computers, which seems odd. They don't have printers in their home and scanners, just things that you would think of average home would have. They don't have that technology and so they are the manpower. So you need a form uploaded and sent or you don't know how to send a form. You don't know how to read the FEMA application. They will read it and they will do it and they will. They helped for weeks. They helped as long as FEMA was here. And I think FEMA left what maybe November or December, so long after it was recovered, as long as FEMA was there, they was there helping out individuals fill out things. Even like you saw meal distributions longer this year, like with health and sisters and strength and knowledge, they was they was still feeding people for a very long time. You saw start still having like different programs we could walk in and you know, they have different like sessions and things that they needed. So I want to say they did like a trauma, some type of group session. I didn't make it, but they did something around like your mental health and hurricane this year. I thought that was very unique and interesting that they hosted it. So you've seen a lot more and you've seen people understanding that just because power restored didn't mean the disaster ended. And I think you're getting where you had that collaboration of continued service because you understand that the disaster is still occurring for many people. So you had a lot more that that lasted longer.

00:35:50 Interviewer

You had mentioned that there were some new services that were available that maybe weren't available in previous disasters. You mentioned this trauma workshop and mental health and disasters. Were there other services, new services that were provided that that weren't offered in previous disasters? And this is specifically by the CAP and CAP partners. So that includes the East Homo Library, the Tesh Start Corporation assistance to strengthen knowledge, helping all people.

00:36:24 Respondent

I think they did a lot more health, a lot more health assessments after the disaster and a lot more mental health care. I don't think in previous disasters we have focused on, we did health, but we didn't always focus on the mental health. So I think we learned after COVID and Hurricane Ida the importance of checking on people mental health. And you had a lot of carbon monoxide trainings and insights, just reminders and what's what do we always use generator safety training to get a lot more of that out this hurricane. And I think that because from Ida, you had a lot of fires, you had a lot of people who harm homes burn because they didn't use the generators properly. You had from a lot of car monoxide issues with generators. So I think they learned. So you had a lot more of that training and insight for Francine, like teaching you on the go. This is your generator needs to be this far away. You need to run it for this long. You need to do the all for this long. You need to have a carbon monoxide detector. So you had a lot more of that. I felt in Hurricane Francine that you didn't have an item. I think we learned from Ida. Unfortunately, it's like the things that happened with the fires and the carbon monoxide that you needed that insight and training. So you had a lot more of that this this time.

00:37:59 Interviewer

And Mr. Great, thank you. Were there any services that were provided that would not have been delivered if the CAP partners had not been engaged?

00:38:11 Respondent

You definitely wouldn't have had the full distribution because like I said, we didn't get a pie site. And I feel like when I, when it came to our parish, it was out of sight, out of mind this area. And I do believe that those, this new distribution, those meal distribution, those supplies distributions, those resources would not have been available if you did not have American Red Cross launch. And then they in, in launching them, they launched a part partners. I think this our community, particularly the east side of Homa, would have definitely been forgotten about without them. You wouldn't have any of those services without them.

00:38:53 Interviewer

You've talked a lot about coordination and you know, in in terms of both how well there there was coordination between partners in the area and how that was sort of reassuring for the community to see that so many people had come out together to work together. Can you talk a little bit more about how that coordination worked with local organizations and and did you feel like there were any services that were duplicated or did that coordination help to reduce, you know, sort of duplication of services as well?

00:39:28 Respondent

I did not see a duplication of services. I think only for my community, I will say the coordination helped because until they came, you didn't have anything and any resources are concurrent in our area. We had you had to travel to receive those services and those resources. And so in my experience, in my, my thoughts, that coordination helped to

make it seamless. And also because you knew like this pocket did like, you know, sisters and sure the knives is going to be here. So half went there does that. I don't know if I'm making any sense. And so then American Red Cross said I'm going to come here. And so you didn't have 5 people in the same area? And they made it, you know, they kind of coordinated and, you know, and helping them and seeing them coordinate those services were really refreshing. So you knew like everybody who was being left out was being touched. And so you didn't have 5 people in one area when you just needed one person and you need it, you could be in five different areas. So I think that that coordination help. Well, you didn't see that duplication of services, but you also was able to ensure you spread those resources in areas where they were needed.

00:40:51 Interviewer

OK, great. Thank you. The the next question is around resources. And from what you saw from the distributions and and from both the food distributions and other types of supplies distributions, did those come? So for example, did the Red Cross provide the materials or the resources to be distributed or did the local community provide most of the resources that were distributed to the community? So what was sort of the balance between resources coming from outside of the community and resources that were from the local community or distributed?

00:41:30 Respondent

So I will say that from my community around say my community, I'm Speaking of the east side of Houma, we did not receive a lot of outside resources unless we was able to travel to obtain them. So our my community received the bulk of their resources from the American Red Cross and their and their partners. Our local community, as I stated before, did not do a good job of ensuring this area had the resources and the supplies that it needed. So our community would not have, had it would have been limited what we would have received had it not been for the Red Cross supplying those supplies and those resources to our community because many persons have limited access to cars it and and even when you went to that distribution, it was only giving you one supply per vehicle. So I felt like our local government forgot about us and didn't care about us, whereas the Red Cross said here we care about you, we see you, there is a need and we're going to support it, even if it came from their own. So the food was American Red Cross, the supplies was American Red Cross in their park. You know what I'm saying? It was American Red Cross and their partners for this particular pocket of community. Now, the West Side, I would say it was probably a equal balance of the American Red Cross and the local government. The bayous I would say were probably more a balance of equal local government in the community, but when it came to the east side, that wasn't that wasn't there. It came from our side partners.

00:43:27 Interviewer

Yeah, it's, it seems like there's just a lot of variation between communities for, for a lot of different reasons, I'm sure. So we, the next couple of questions are about the speed of service delivery and how did the the cap and cap partners help to provide services more

quickly. What, what, What was the comparison? So comparing the speed of services that you had received this time from your previous disaster, were you able to get the resources you needed quickly or was there a delay from the time the disaster struck to the time you received services?

00:44:09 Respondent

So I would say there was a there was it was faster last time it OK. So Hurricane Francine had an impact. Hurricane Ida was devastating. So I think it's more difficult to compare them only because in Hurricane, our previous disaster, we lost every single resource that you can have. So you lost telecommunications, your telephones didn't work, you lost lights, lights didn't work, Water and sewage was not working. I'm missing one. Power, gas were all shut down after Hurricane Ida just because of how devastating it was. So it took a long time. There was a very delayed response to getting resources here. Hurricane Ida, I mean, Hurricane Francine, we only lost like 2 of the four, you know, major things. But I will say that I I don't know if it was 20 hours later they were calling and standing up saying like, hey, let's do a meal distribution. And I'm like, y'all like in my mind, I'm not gonna lie. I was like, how we going to do a meal distribute? Like the storm just happened. Like y'all already making plans and y'all got a time like at 5:00 we're going to be excuse, let's check. Thank you, bless you. Let's be telling the truth. All right. So I was like, how is like hurricane Francine was probably like that evening. I want to say like 10-11 o'clock people on my phone. I'm like how, what? How are we on my phone making plans? Well, a meal distribution. I'm like y'all, the water is not itself falling and they were already making plans and they was like at 5:00 we're going to be pick finest. They said twins finest a spot. But 5:00 we're going to be here. We're going to do meals and we're going to have supplies. I'm like, what is going on? Doctor Gilda and people. So it was, it was, it was, I was like, wait, hold on, let me go brush my teeth and and get myself together and find a spot because apparently at 5:00 we're going to have dinner because y'all going to not have lights. It was like y'all not going to we already know y'all not going to have lights. So find a spot and find somebody. So we called our Rotary to see because you borrowed a cook trailer. They brought the food, they they had the supplies and they had a distribution set up. I would not lie, I have never seen that in my life. Maybe because I'm not. I went on brag before I was like what is going on? Like it took like 2 weeks before things started rolling like Hurricane Ida. I was like, is this guy supposed to be on a regular consistent basis? Like we supposed to be up that bad working? And it was like, well, yeah, and we setting up a shelter, we operating. I'm like, so yes, that that was that was that was jarring, but good jarring to see like they was like ready. It was like, this is where we work. I was like, OK, you did say our job is to help after disaster. I know y'all was boots on the ground like that that quick. But yes, they came. I, I, I will not lie, I don't know if it was 20 hours after the disaster 'cause they was ringing my phone the very next day at 10:00 and it was like at 5:00 we gonna be serving a meal. So at 5:00, I knew we had to find a place the for the new ball. Turkey necks and something else and something else so that they had food. Yes, so great.

00:47:55 Interviewer

Well, thank you so much for that. And I know we only have 5 minutes left. And so I just wanted to ask you, I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions. Were there things that worked well during the disaster that should be done again in a future disaster response? So what were the kind of things that you felt? Yeah. This should be whether whether it was related to, you know, the quality or cultural appropriateness or or the speed like you were saying, you know, getting things out there quickly. What were the kind?

00:48:19 Respondent

Of things that you think.

00:48:20 Interviewer

Should be done in a future disaster response.

00:48:23 Respondent

I definitely think the communication and collaboration with community partners should continue. I definitely believe that the axing of community leaders to be a part of that discussion should continue as we had. In addition, I think the collaboration of different resources to ensure you didn't overlap would definitely be continued. The speed and the readiness our library is really important to us. So their continuation to be a part of that conversation, even all of the partners, I think the partners did a great job of collaborating this, this, this, this Hurricane Francine. And you had a lot, you had a lot more people who were willing to do the work for the work and not for the recognition. And I definitely think that that should continue. And so I will also say the continuing of being of service to people even when the local government has whatever issue it has. But like the community, like American Red Cross, us as partners, you know, you kind of let government them do what you want to do. Like we God fuss and fight. But to see, to see people like the American Red Cross and the partner say, regardless of what they have going on, the persons, the people need us. So this is our lane. This is what we're going to stay in and this is how we're going to come around. It was really good to see that and not get tangled up in what the government had going on. I think in years past, they kind of got tangled up and they didn't allow that. They'll just stay focused on the mission and the people. And the people was definitely, we were definitely blessed this time. I'm going to say us, we were blessed this time to see that. And so I think that that would definitely continue.

00:50:25 Interviewer

Well, conversely, are there things that you think should be done differently? Is there anything that you would have liked to have seen that could be done differently next time?

00:50:36 Respondent

What would I like to see done differently? And I I can't put that on you because I would like to see a more cohesive between the government and the community. But that's not necessarily I don't know if that's on the Red Cross. I think that's on our government where it shouldn't be. If I can be seen, I'm gonna do it. I'm just going to do it. But that's not on the Red

Cross and that I think that would be more on our government end. But I think on American Red Cross, and I don't know, because everyone we've we met, they had their heart on their sleeves. And I actually love that. Like you can see they were very passionate about the work and ensuring that we recover. And I like to know that there were people who care just about our community just as much about our community. You know, they went from our community. So what would I like to see different? Well, that's a good question. Let's skip that one. Let's go to the next one I might have and you can.

00:51:40 Interviewer

And you can also, you know, anytime after this interview, if you think of things that you would like to tell us, feel free just to drop us a note and we're happy to, or if you want to drop on another call, we're happy to join another call at any point. So just so because we know it's hard when you're, we have a short amount of time, just tell all the of everything you would like to tell. So, so feel free to follow up with any information after the call. But we did also want to ask, you know, if there's anything, any important, anything else important that you'd like to share about what you know, your relationship with the, what happened during the disaster with cap and cap partners with the American Red Cross. Is there anything else you'd like to to share or any stories you'd like to tell As you know, just as A to to let people know you know your your experience during the disaster.

00:52:35 Respondent

OK, sorry. So this is something I'm good at. So I will say this. My sister and I was at home and we were like duly frustrated by the lack of resources and supplies to our community that we saw that there was an oversight. And so we reached out to Doctor Gilda and Dr. Navy and we told them and like she was like, well, what areas need help and where do they need help? And they was like we told her and she was like, maybe the that day she like what, 12:00? If we can get some volunteers, we're going to do a meal distribution at the Mckinnonville gym if you let people know. And so me and my sister went around telling everybody they're going to have some meals and some supplies. And it was so refreshing to where you felt like it was a venting session, but instead it became a problem solving session. And then from there it was they came the next day, then they maybe came the Saturday and then they went to another area and we was like, hey, we can bring you to this place. So and I can't remember the guy's name. And so we went to the Walmart on the east side and the guy was on his bike and he was like, I was so hungry. And he was like, I'm so glad y'all came to the Walmart and I'm going to cry but I'm gonna cry baby. And he was until to see people say that they were so hungry. And that's when we had a lot of talks with the Hispanic population. They were scared to come at 1st and they thought it was like, you know, a scam. And they felt so comfortable, like, but we was really hungry and the younger the son was speaking for the family and they was like, you know, they was coming to supply, but they didn't have a lot of money. And so it was so good to tell someone something and then they go and do something about it and then they brought you along for the journey. And then we went work in the shelter and I thought I knew all that it was about giving a person a shower. And I learned that there's a process to showers. And I've never in my life learned that there

was a process to shower because I'm just always one in my home and taking a shower. And you know, you had different helps of people, different types of help, some people more mobile and some people needed more assistance. And it was so good to see community of people come together and be about each other. And so that is what I will ultimately leave, is that the American Red Cross reaffirmed to me that community of people, when we come together, we can do great things for each other. And I am so thankful that Doctor Gilda and Doctor Brown had emergency preparedness meeting. And I came in there with my loud mouth and my questions that I always have. And they stopped and said, and Doctor Gilda stopped and said, would you show up at this meeting? Would you show up here? Could I put you? Could I, could I call on you if I need you and me and my sister not have, we're not American Red Cross partners. But I was like, sure. Because I do believe that you shouldn't just talk about things. You should always act as well and as someone that you can call upon and also be called upon to help each other for people. That was so good. And it was so good to see the elderly say, oh, I didn't know anything about that medicine. And Miss Sheena, I'll be like, Oh, no, no, no, you can't take this medicine right there because she's a nurse. And you seen the tashes and the stars. And I, I know them in real life. I talked them on a regular basis. We have relationships. But seeing them being able to come together for our community when they hurt and understand that not everybody recovered at the same pace, it was so good and so refreshing. And it was a stark difference from Hurricane Ida.

00:56:52 Interviewer

Oh great, well, that's a wonderful story and the community is lucky to have you as part of the community and and speaking out and asking the right questions and bringing people together the problem solve. So so thank you again for taking the time to share your insights and for and your experiences today. We've very much appreciated it. We very much appreciated meeting you today and any feedback, you know, the of you you may have is incredibly valuable. So if you're leaving this call and, and, and you think of different, more stories you'd like to tell us, or if there's any other information or if there are questions we didn't ask you that you feel like we should have asked you, please feel free just to drop me a note. And I'm on the, the meeting invite. So it's just carol.chang@redcross.org. So feel free to contact us if you have any additional thoughts. And and so if there's anything the Red Cross could do even better in the future, we're always happy to hear about that. So please don't hesitate to reach out if we can do anything else. And we just thank you so much for your time and for your partnership and for all your work in the community.

00:57:57 Respondent

Thank each and you. I feel like I've talked too much, but that's who I am.

00:58:03 Interviewer

No, thank you. Thank you. I mean we.

00:58:06 Respondent

Just such.



00:58:07 Interviewer

Great information and, and we, we appreciate it that you talked and, and you let us know your experience and, and everything that you would you had been through because we know it's hard being in Louisiana during hurricane season. We, we, we completely understand that too. So.

00:58:23 Respondent

Too. And we just had to move our festival to the fall and to the we simply do a, a spring festival because I don't like hurricanes, but it didn't happen this spring. So it's going to happen in the fall. And I'm like Lord Jesus, please baby Jesus, please be kind to us and the Hurricanes for the third time this year. But y'all have a great.

00:58:44 Interviewer

Morning. You too.

00:58:46 Respondent

It's called till noon. I'm not going to do that. I'm going to be mindful. Your time and mines Ty. You don't say much. You are definitely soaking it all in. Keep learning. You got to say you. You will be what Miss Cara is or better or higher in the future. But this is your time as a young person to learn and to gather as much insight as you can and I can tell that you are definitely tapped in for they learn it all. So continue doing and thriving. Thank you Carrie Way, great interviewer. Born born boys, very motherly, very calm and gentle and soothing and just makes you want to talk more. So thank each and everyone of y'all of y'all time. I'm going to hang up. If I don't, I will.

00:59:37 Interviewer

Continue talking. Thank you so much have a great day and say hi to your sister from us too. Well, so Ty, any, any, any thoughts that you would like to provide at this point? I took a lot of notes. Yeah. So, so you know, you can take all your notes and you can upload them into the teams. I don't know if you have teams yet because of the e-mail e-mail issue, but you can send me your transcript as well. And then we can let me just turn off the recording for one thing. So this part isn't on there. Stop recording. And I'm also going to be posting.