

00:00:02 Interviewer 1

I'm asking questions about different types of organizations that that provided support during the during Hurricane Francine such as the Start Corporation and Lowlander corporate, the Lowlander Center. And so we're would like to know anything that you know about the quality of services that the partners provided. And we're also going to be asking some questions about the speed of delivery and whether or not the the partners met the community needs. And anything that you thought worked well or could be improved for for in the future for disaster services. So the first question is, compared to past disasters, how was your community's experience in receiving help this time?

00:00:59 Respondent

You talking about from Francine?

00:01:01 Interviewer 1

From Francine, yes.

00:01:03 Respondent

OK. So, well, obviously we had in, in 2001, we had Hurricane Ida, which was a pretty big storm in our area.

00:01:11 Interviewer 1

Yeah.

00:01:14 Respondent

It's switching over to my phone and my truck. So excuse me. So, so from my, I think our, you know, law enforcement response, we were able to get roads cleared. So, you know, I have a maybe my way of thinking if you would, once roads are cleared, resources can head down to the areas to get to people. To me, that's one of the most important things. And so some of the things we've been able to do is we've we've contracted companies through FEMA where we're able to get roads relatively clear, so we're able to get resources, get power restored. And I think during those particulars in, in that, in that transitional process when people are trying to clean up, that's when they need most of the resources to figure out what they need from water to the basic stuff and then other resources that are available to them. And as far as my offices, as far as my offices, when we tap into those resources, we can either direct people or or get the help to where the help needs to be, needs to be. And in our region and in our particular area, I mean, we live on a coast and majority when there's a storm, the Bayou region along the coast is some of the hardest hit areas. So a lot of times the the closer we can get those resources to them, the better off it is. And, and that, and that's really our, our goal. Any, any NGO organization that's trying to help people, we try to get them out there, any church organization, because our churches have to say they do a very good job with some of the resources that they have that that gets it out to the people. So I'm, I'm a firm believer of a lot of other resources that way between the law enforcement and local government, we're trying to get roads, get power restored and, and assist with getting the

people of resources they need. So from that aspect, you know my priority, like I said, getting roads cleared and getting resources where they need to be. And we we work real hard making that happen so we get the people the help that they need.

00:03:28 Interviewer 1

OK, great. Thank you. During Hurricane Francine, did you notice any partners like the Star Corporation or Lowlander Center? Did you notice them working in your community? Also the East Homo Library.

00:03:46 Respondent

We had we had several look there are no storms. We had several, we had several organizations helping from churches to start to all of these particulars. And, and so I think from, from Ida to Francine, our transition, because Ida, let's face it, that was a very, very pet storm that that did a lot of damage in our whole area where Francine wasn't quite as bad. However, I think what we've learned from Ida, we've been able to do it a lot faster and the turn around was much faster from power to getting back to normal and those resources. A lot of times that's filling a lot of gaps in that transition period. So we did have, there was, there was help and and I think it was pretty effective for us, especially during that time.

00:04:32 Interviewer 1

OK, how easy or hard was it for people in the community to get help after Hurricane Francine?

00:04:43 Respondent

Well, I mean, we were able to direct, direct a lot of people to where the help was at and I didn't, I didn't hear anything from the backside that they weren't helping. So and so I think there was probably no issues as far as that's concerned.

00:05:00 Interviewer 1

And were people, did you feel like the the nonprofit organizations did a good job of reaching people who needed help the most? I believe.

00:05:11 Respondent

From the churches, from the churches that had their resources from Red Cross to all the other non NGO organizations, they were helpful in the community. But I mean, in our area, in our, in the culture in South Louisiana, look, we help comes out and I, I think over a period of time, what we've been able to do is a lot more organized and, and I feel it, it's, it's much more effective for our community.

00:05:39 Interviewer 1

And can you go into that a little more about how the organization has helped the community?

00:05:47 Respondent

Well, I'll, I'll start with the churches and I can't say enough about the churches because the churches tap and all kind of other resources that they have in the networks. And you know, a lot of, a lot of times we, we obviously have churches all over our parish. And the more resources you have at different areas, the more resource you have at different areas, the better off the community is because it's, it's not located in one location, it's throughout the parish. And so it's easy, easier accessible. And, and if I was to make a recommendation to any organization, make sure it's accessible to the areas where it's needed. And we try to help facilitate that as far as from from a law enforcement perspective, from my perspective is getting it where it needs to be and make sure it makes sense. I mean, if you know, if the bayous were heavy hit, they're obviously going to need more resources. So get those resources close to the Bayou. If not on Bayou is possible and we use other facilities to help get get those resources out to.

00:06:49 Interviewer 1

Right. And so how in terms of improving the organization, were there certain ways that you improve the organization from after Hurricane Ida to Hurricane Francine?

00:07:02 Respondent

Well, like I said, we're, we're able to get roads much, we, we're able to get roads cleared much faster. I mean, look, from Hurricane Ida, it took us about 24 to 36 hours to get all of the roads cleared in our parish from Hurricane Francine, what we've learned, and it wasn't as much devastation, but when the storm passed, we was able to get our resources out there. We we were able to get out there. Just give you an example. We're able to get out there probably 738 o'clock at night when we started making our way through the parish after the storm passed by that next morning, within within 12 hours, the roads were cleared. We were to get electric trucks and get resources to where it needs to be.

00:07:43 Interviewer 1

Oh great.

00:07:44 Respondent

So we, we've been able to do that much faster. And I mean, as far as you know from a law enforcement or from perspective as a sheriff, this is our community and it's important we get the help where it needs to go. We're we're helping, of course, doing with everything we can. But at the same time, get all these other organizations out there and get it, get it down to the, to the, to the, you know, to Ground Zero, so to speak. And get as close as possible to that. Because, you know, the people are there, they're trying to either clean up, they're trying to do their stuff or whatever that they need to do. And the the closer the resources are, the better off it is.

00:08:21 Interviewer 1

And what do you see as some of the areas that really worked well during Francine in terms

of getting the help where it needs to go and where do you think that there are still some gaps?

00:08:34 Respondent

Well, you know, during a hurricane or during a storm like a hurricane where 90% of the time most devastation is along the coastal region, which is our Bayou region and sometimes the North End of the parish, like I'd have sustained quite a bit of damage. But most of the time during the Bayou region is always going to be the hardest hit. So, you know, we concentrate on making sure we're at a heavier areas, you know, that's a priority to get to get as much resources there. And then once we get the resources there, we know the people get help, then we can kind of triage, OK, what other areas they got hit. And we try to more or less direct where the damage is, where the people are more likely to need the help that they need and get it to them.

00:09:25 Interviewer 1

And.

00:09:25 Respondent

I have go.

00:09:27 Interviewer 1

Ahead.

00:09:27 Respondent

So I have, I have high water vehicles, I have emergency vehicles. And at some at some point of time as Ida, we got resources, we were receiving resources and I was loading my 5 tons up. We were in the neighborhoods getting it to the people at ground level. And to me, you know, as resilient as our people are here, sometimes that's the best thing. Go out there, figure out what they need and get it to them. And we did a lot of that as well.

00:09:55 Interviewer 1

And weren't nonprofit partners also helping to determine what the needs were in the community?

00:10:02 Respondent

Yes, I mean, it's, I think it's, I think it's a team effort. It's a combination between local law enforcement, local government and and a lot of the nonprofits is getting in there and figure out what's needed and making sure we get the resources needed for for the community.

00:10:17 Interviewer 1

And do you feel like the services that were offered by partners, were they a good fit for the community's cultural and language needs?

00:10:28 Respondent

I, I believe so. I mean, I, I haven't, I haven't heard any, any back of, of horror stories or anything from, from some of the resources that people were ever getting provided. I mean, you know, it's just, I think it's important is, is, is targeting who really needs it and making sure they're getting it right. And, and that's what I, you know, we can assess and OK, this is the hardest hit areas. And I mean, when my guys are out there, we're, we're doing assessments of damage and we can tell where the heavier areas are hit. And obviously that's going to be the areas that's going to need the most resources.

00:11:04 Interviewer 1

And were there any organizations that you've felt like did a really good job in determining who was most impacted and then delivering those services appropriately? Can you off the top of your head, can you think of any organizations?

00:11:19 Respondent

Well, if, if I was just to make a, a, a, a general statement, all organizations contributed to the success and our recovery. So I can't say nothing bad of anybody with a good heart that's trying to do something to help our community. The best thing we can do is support it as much as we can. And you know, that's that's really my philosophy on any catastrophic event. When people come here to help you, make sure you have something they can do to help.

00:11:48 Interviewer 1

Great. Thank you. Yeah, I think that's always really important to to remember. Were there any new services that were offered during Hurricane Hurricane Francine that weren't available on previous disasters?

00:12:04 Respondent

You know from from Ida that I can recall, there was a whole lot here and, and I think from Hurricane Francine, I think we've seen a lot of the same ones, same organizations out here helping and we recovered from Francine pretty fast compared to Hurricane Ida. I mean, within a week, within a week things were back to normal, everything. So I think that's a testament of any organization. I was here to help us get back to normal.

00:12:32 Interviewer 1

That does seem to be a really quick recovery time, yes. Do you have any it?

00:12:37 Respondent

Was within a within a week, we were pretty much back to normal. Stores were open, everything was back to normal. Probably, you know, things got back to more of a normalcy. If I would say, you know, you still had people had damage and stuff and we still have we were there were still help being provided. But as far as the the amount and the number and the catastrophic compared to item, we were able to recover pretty fast and get power back

on and and those type of basic needs recovered pretty fast and and stores are open. So when, when, when those things start to happen, things get back to normal.

00:13:14 Interviewer 1

Were there any? I'm sorry. Go ahead.

00:13:18 Respondent

So that's, you know, to me that's important is no matter from any storm from Ida. You know, Ida took us quite a while to get back to normal, however. And look, some people's damage is still they still deal with it. But I guess the point is when I say normal gas stations are open, you get fuel, the grocery stores are open, your department stores are open. So the basic necessities and needs for people was there and available. But you know, it's that time between back to normal, that's what I'll call kind of getting back to normalcy. But it's that in between time getting them there is where I think a lot of these organizations where it becomes much helpful. It's, it's, it's that transitional step to what's back to normal like stores and gas and everything else. But when it's not available, that's what we try to do is fill those gaps to help people get to that point. But you know, there's a lot of moving parts that happen from getting power restored, getting stores back open, getting everything back to normal. And there's a lot of steps and, and we're trying to be involved between local government and law enforcement, Sheriff's Office, Homa, Police Department, all of those agencies. We're trying to facilitate help as much as we can in all of those aspects at the same time help people between those those trouble steps of you know, fuel needs, you know, I need cleaning supplies, we need water, food, things like that because the stores are not open. So that transitional phase, whether it's one week or whether it's one month, you know, those things need to happen. And that's where I feel any non governmental organization, that's where it's the most beneficial, helping them get to where we get to that normalcy.

00:14:58 Interviewer 1

Right. Yeah, that I think that's, I mean, I think that's an enormous undertaking to bring together all those different partners in the community to do that. So thank you for all your work and and pulling together all those efforts.

00:15:11 Respondent

Well, look, this this is a team effort. It's always a team effort. It takes a team to get a great result. There's no one organization that can take credit for anything. All I can say is everybody needs to do their part. And from a lot of our nonprofit organizations that come here, our churches, Red Cross, all of these entities that come here to help is a blessing, is truly a blessing. And we're always grateful for that. And they've always been a help us to get to those steps. And look, our community, these are very stressful times for our people.

00:15:51 Interviewer 1

Yeah, and for sure.

00:15:53 Respondent

We try to do as much as we can to help them to get back to normal. And, and I like I said between what I say normalcy, when the stores are open and things are back to normal, people are still dealing with damage. Still people are still dealing with the aftermath of from the Hurricanes or whatever catastrophic event. But it's the important part is getting into the next steps to normalcy. And it's still not normal. But, and, and there's still, they still need a little help to get them over the top because you got to realize some of these people may have evacuated and when they evacuated, that cost them money and maybe they don't have a lot of lot of money to help. So kind of helping them get back to that normal state. And I see a lot of times even when the storms pass, things are back to normal. We still have a lot of NGOs and church still helping people out for that transitional phase, if that makes sense. If they were and people on a people that are on a tight budget, I mean, if they had to evacuate, hotels can get pretty expensive. If they had to go up north, you know, fuel cost was expensive and all of those things. And now they're back to normal and OK, can they afford food? Can they afford some of the basic things to get back to normal? There's going to be a tough transitional phase till they get to that point. And I think continuing helping to that point is important as well. And we try to help make sure that's happening as much as we can. But that's an effort from all our, our, that's an effort from Red Cross. That's a, that's an effort from all entities to include churches and everything that contribute to helping our people get back on, get back to normal. And, and sometimes it takes a while, but, you know, I think just having some compassion and understanding that is important. And we have compassionate people in our community. And I can't say enough about all our churches on what they do. You're going to hear me say that a lot, but I cannot, I cannot say enough about how good I can start naming some of these churches. But you know, every one of them tries to do good. And I think it's our job to help support those organizations and or any organization for that matter, to get our people back to normal, right? But we've been very blessed. We've been very blessed with a lot of that. So I can say, you know, we're very thankful and blessed for that.

00:18:15 Interviewer 1

And just related to that, you had mentioned that churches are really helpful in getting back to that state of normalcy. Are there other characteristics of organizations or other types of organizations and, and what makes what makes churches so good at helping to get people back to normal? And are there other organizations that have some of those same kind of qualities that help people that are really good at helping?

00:18:42 Respondent

I I think one for churches that their locations, they're spread out throughout the parish. That's one, they have resources and they have their own networks of getting assistance here for the storms. And I support those networks and help those networks that they have get here for the people, if that makes sense.

00:19:03 Interviewer 1

No, no, that makes complete sense.

00:19:06 Respondent

So we try to support that. There's a lot of pastors prior to storm, I will get on the phone with them and they say, you know, we have some resources that are staged here or staged there. And after the storm, can you help us get these resources here? Absolutely. And we will get them where they need to go because we know that's important in a process of clearing roads and a process of everything. We're trying to get the resources where they need to be and that way they can sort of those next steps can come into play, like when the people need those resources, we try to have them there for them. Or those churches do a great job organizing those things. And Red Cross has been a very tremendous help. United Way has helped tremendously during Hurricane Ida. There's been a lot of organizations and you know, even the food, the local food bank has been very helpful. And so, you know, all of these things coupled is a success. So to say 1 was doing more than other. Everybody was doing their everybody was doing anything they possibly can with the resources they had to help our people. And to me, that's the ultimate most important thing and just. We're able to to utilize those resources and put them out an area where it's feasible. You know, you might have Red Cross working in one area, but the United Way work another area. They're still doing good, but it's it's spreading those resources out so that people can have some get, get that help. Having everything just concentrated in one location can be kind of congested, but if you can spread low that it makes better sense of getting the resources where they need to go.

00:20:40 Interviewer 1

Yeah, I think that that that's always, I mean, because you don't want to duplicate services in one particular area where.

00:20:48 Respondent

That's correct.

00:20:49 Interviewer 1

Yeah. And while other areas may not be getting assistance too and and then you have one area that may be getting, you know, the same assistance from multiple organizations. So that's not positive.

00:21:01 Respondent

I, I, I can't say enough about all these organizations because they want to contribute and help. Some can do more than others, but you know what that that doesn't matter. The fact is they're contributing and you try to spread a little debt throughout the parish at our area. So you know, everybody's getting some help and, and certain things that we can identify needs and, and it's needs. And then and a lot of things we do is focus on getting these businesses back from the small business. Small business is the heart of our community. And so, you



know, our, our commercial fisherman, we got to get them back to normal. Our, you know, our small businesses are, and, and big businesses get everything back to normal. So the normal resources our people are used to everyday getting these things back online as fast as possible is very important.

00:21:51 Interviewer 1

For sure. And so I know your time is limited. Do you have any additional recommendations for the future? Are there things that we should we should? Any takeaways or lessons learned that we should do next time a disaster occurs?

00:22:07 Respondent

Well, you know, the, the thing I would, would constantly encourage is get with local, get, get with the local government Sheriff's Office, the local law enforcement, home of Police Department getting directly with us and, and the emergency operations center, our EOC getting with them and, and all of that. And that way we can direct, we could all communicate. We know where the damage is at. We know where the people need the most help. So we can basically get you all to where to those particular areas and, and spread low to, you know, we have a, a pretty big Bayou region. It's just not one little Rd. that goes to 1 Bayou. We have we have several Bayou regions and Geo geographically put them in all of those particular areas where it's accessible to the community and the people that really need it. And it's just make sure we coordinate that. And if I was, if I was to recommend, I mean we have Red Cross, you have all of these organizations as sometimes communicate with those other organizations. Y'all look, everybody wants to do the same thing. They're trying to help our people and figuring out the type of resources Red Cross may offer versus United Way or any other organization is trying to spread load that throughout the region. So y'all are not duplicating efforts. But at the end of the day, at the end of the day, from Red Cross to United, whatever organization, y'all, all of those organizations are trying to help our people and communicate with them as well. So y'all spread a loting throughout our community.

00:23:35 Interviewer 1

Yeah, Yeah. That's very important.

00:23:39 Respondent

Reaching across the aisle from another organization that's trying to help, just like you. You know it on those times, the team up for that one common cause can do great things. You know, always said one organization can do great things with a team. But you you team up with two organizations under a catastrophic event, they can do 100 times more.

00:24:03 Interviewer 1

Oh, for sure. I think we can leverage each other. That's that's so important.

00:24:08 Respondent

That's right. And, and knowing the resources y'all have for this other organization, what they have and what they have is like we can come here as a big unite, a big gigantic task force to help the community or help or help communities get back on their feet. And teaming up with all of those resources, knowing what each one of them has on how y'all can help. Bringing that to the table would make it a lot easier for for the ground level deployment if you would.

00:24:34 Interviewer 1

So are are there things that can be done before the disaster that you would recommend?

00:24:40 Respondent

I would communicate with our emergency operations center. This is what we have, this is what we're doing, this is what we're willing to do. This is how we can help and when we come down, this is what we'd like to do. And once the damage is assessed with no better best place to put you where so you can provide assistance to you all there to and I mean, you know, if, if, if, if the Bayou regions is is damaged severely. A a a department store on the North End of the parish or in a big parking lot on the North End of the parish when the South end of the parish is damaged. Doesn't make a lot of sense, right?

00:25:16 Interviewer 1

Yeah.

00:25:17 Respondent

You know, it's getting them it, it's, it's like I said, my goal is to get those resources as close to the to the heavy areas damaged, as close as possible because that's where it pays dividends for our community.

00:25:32 Interviewer 1

Great. Well, I just want to thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us today. Ivy, do you have any clarifying questions or remarks?

00:25:44 Respondent

No, ma'am, I mean, look, it takes the effort of everybody to have a great result.

00:25:50 Interviewer 1

Yeah, yeah, for sure.

00:25:52 Respondent

And I mean at the end of the day. At the end of the day, no matter how bad it is, we do everything we can for our people, especially when they, when they, when we, when we get a, get a catastrophic event like a hurricane that's catastrophic in our area. It's the efforts of everyone. And, and look, and like I said, we're truly blessed with, we're truly blessed with, with, with, with teams that that help us and assist us with that. And I can go on about other

organizations that was aftermath that help our community build home, rebuild their homes. You know, I can talk and you know, those guys were a true blessing. And you know, at the end of the day, there were so many organizations that were just trying to contribute. And for that, as a sheriff, I will be forever grateful to every one of those organizations that were able to help my people.

00:26:45 Interviewer 1

OK, great. Well, we're very grateful for you. We're we're grateful to you for all the work that you do in the community.

00:26:53 Respondent

We do a lot, but you know what this is? This was my calling. This is what God wants me to do, and that's what I'm going to do.

00:26:59 Interviewer 1

Well, thank you so much and, and we again, we really appreciate your, your, your feedback is so valuable to us and it's going to really help us to learn and improve our disaster response even even more in the future.

00:27:11 Respondent

And and and and on the last thing, local churches, local churches, if, if that might be something y'all may want to team up with them guys, because if y'all get resources them, they got look, their constituents, their, their, their, their church members, They all come together to help others, not just their church members. They help the community in those particular areas. Supporting those guys would be a good thing too. And y'all may do that already, but that's not a That wouldn't be a bad idea if y'all haven't consider that because you know what you're doing is becoming.

00:27:46 Interviewer 1

Yeah. And we have been doing that in some in some areas around Terrebonne Parish. So we've been helping things like even helping with food distribution. So if the church does things like food distributions on a regular basis, we try to prepare them for disaster. So if they need a generator, for example, we provide them with a generator to to help them to, if they have refrigerated items, for example, that may perish during a a disaster, we try to provide with that or we try to provide them with vehicles or other types of resources during a disaster. So so I'm glad.

00:28:24 Respondent

Y'all doing that? That's a good thing. That's definitely a good.

00:28:27 Interviewer 1

Thing Well, thank you, thank you. We're and we're, we're, we're grateful for the work that you do. And, and if you have any other thoughts that you would like to provide to us, my, my

e-mail address is in the meeting invite. And so please feel free to reach out if you have any questions. And, and, and if there are questions that we didn't ask you and you think that we really need to know, we really should have asked you, then please feel free to reach out about that as well. But we really appreciate the time you've taken this morning, OK?

00:28:56 Respondent

Thank you so much.

00:28:57 Interviewer 1

Thank you. Have a great day.

00:29:00 Respondent

All right, you too. Bye bye.