

00:00:02 Interviewer

I just wanted to let you know that we're asking about disaster response activities that were carried out by the community adaptation partners. And these groups included Fish of Sanibel, Captiva Community Cooperative, Premier Mobile Health Solutions, Beacon of Hope, St. Martin de Porres Outreach Community Ministries, And these are all organizations that worked in Lee County that helped during hurricanes Milton and, and Lean and, and these are all organizations that may have helped provide things like shelter, food supplies, translation or emotional support. And so we're going to be referring to these organizations as CAP and CAP partners during the interview. And we're interested in hearing your thoughts about how they supported your community. So we'll be asking a couple of questions related to quality and we'll also be asking some questions about the speed of services, were they able to deliver services quickly and any recommendations about the the about the program and and how recommendations moving forward. So first, in terms of quality compared to past disasters, how was your community's experience in receiving help this?

00:01:21 Respondent

Time, I think it, it's been much better. I mean, I've been involved as the community and as you know the partnerships and stuff. So I would say the coordination is much better.

00:01:34 Interviewer

Oh, I'm sorry, first of all, would you mind just introducing yourself and, and your organization and your, and the, and the role that you played during the disasters, Helene and Milton?

00:01:46 Respondent

Sure. My name is Marissa Stress Peterson. I'm our COO with Harry Chapin Food Bank.

00:01:55 Interviewer

And and, and so you, you had mentioned that your the support was much, much better. Can you? Can you? I'm just describe why it's better. In what way was it? How did it feel different this time?

00:02:10 Respondent

I think the coordination, you know, was better this time. I think now I guess going back with Hurricane Ian, obviously it was a much larger disaster and impact. So that did play a role. But I think having just that community coordination this time around did assist with some of like additionally with our organizations and the community as a whole. I'm just an additional resource maybe?

00:02:42 Interviewer

Additional resources during Hurricanes Helene and Milton, did you notice any of any of the partners unlike Fischer, Sanibel, Contiva Community Cooperative, Premier Mobile Health

Services, Beacon of Hope or Saint Martin Depores Outreach Ministries? Did you notice the morphine in your community?

00:03:03 Respondent

Yeah. So they're all partners of ours as well. So I think it was nice to see that. I do feel like with Red Cross, it helped. It almost helped them stay focused with us a little bit more.

00:03:20 Interviewer

And what kinds of help did they offer?

00:03:24 Respondent

Well, I think it was more making sure all the needs were met in the community and not everybody. I know there was a lot of duplications, you know, in the beginning with like a hurricane in and not, which caused a lot of chaos. And I think this time around it was a little bit more, like I said, focused and streamlined. And so we could also be able to focus on needs that were not met instead of running around trying to figure out what was going on.

00:03:55 Interviewer

Can you talk a little bit about the how that duplication you were able to avoid duplication this time?

00:04:03 Respondent

Yeah. I think this time around, like I said, it was easier to be able to focus on the part partners as a whole because there was an extra set of, you know, resources, you know, like Red Cross going out and assessing that situation and having that almost that delays on going back and forth, you know, and not everybody coming at you at once.

00:04:29 Interviewer

Do you feel like it was easy or hard for people to in your community to to get services, particularly from CAP and CAP partners during the Hurricanes, during Hurricanes Milton and Helene?

00:04:42 Respondent

Yeah, I would definitely say it was easier.

00:04:46 Interviewer

And did people know where to go? Did they, you mentioned that things seem to be coordinated. Did people in the community know where to get get assistance?

00:04:58 Respondent

I think so, yeah.

00:05:01 Interviewer

What do you think made it easier?

00:05:05 Respondent

I think things were, I don't want to say advertised, but there's a lot more conversations about it.

00:05:14 Interviewer

Do you feel like that CAP and the CAP partners did a good job of reaching people who needed help the most?

00:05:21 Respondent

Yeah.

00:05:23 Interviewer

Can are there any examples of people who usually get overlooked who may have gotten help this time, and are there any examples? Were there any examples of people who may have been overlooked in the past who may have received services this time?

00:05:45 Respondent

I mean, I don't have an specific example, but I'm sure that did happen just because I think, you know, in previous disasters, like I said, I go back to the coordination just wasn't there. I think we were unfamiliar. I don't want to say we're unfamiliar with disasters and because we've had disasters in the past, but I just don't think we were as coordinated in the past until Hurricane Ian happened and it was like, Oh my gosh, now we're dealing with a major disaster. So now, you know, coming out of that, we had to really understand what that looks like. So I think, I really do think the coordination played into a big role of that.

00:06:22 Interviewer

So that so that's the coordination started to improve after Hurricane Ian. What were some of the mechanisms that helped that improvement?

00:06:31 Respondent

I mean, I, I think, you know, this program came out of it really and understanding what the needs were and how do we work together as a community.

00:06:41 Interviewer

And so how did you do that? Would you? Were there meetings or coalitions or?

00:06:46 Respondent

I mean.

00:06:46 Interviewer

What kinds of what kind of activities can you describe?

00:06:50 Respondent

Them I think it was some assessments that came out of it, a lot of these kind of interviews and feedback sessions, planning meetings, coalitions, partnership groups.

00:07:05 Interviewer

Can you describe some of the groups a little more like who leads them and how frequently do you meet and and what are some of the objectives of of some of these groups that helped with that coordination?

00:07:18 Respondent

So we have, you know, United Way's involved, you know, Red Cross, I'm involved with them. Our, our group hair achievement. You know, we're all meeting together. I don't know. I mean, I guess we're we're meeting I guess mostly during disaster time frames. But you know, in the beginning it was probably more like quarterly and then you know, more monthly time frame. You know, the EO CS are involved. But I think before hurricane it was more of an EOC group and then it became more of including like the non for profit partners.

00:07:58 Interviewer

And how did that?

00:07:58 Respondent

Change driven, yeah, it it really changed after hurricane and and it became of we really have to get the community involved and not just, you know, at the USC.

00:08:09 Interviewer

Level. And so there was a big shift to to community and having nonprofits at the table. Yeah. And how do you think that changed the coordination?

00:08:22 Respondent

I think it changed drastically the coordination because it it didn't rely just on, you know, local government agencies. And it became, you know, a part of, you know, the community, Yeah, in a sense, became people, you know, helping and assisting each other.

00:08:41 Interviewer

And so during those meetings you would discuss different ways to coordinate.

00:08:46 Respondent

Yeah, and the needs of what the needs look like, you know, because I think we found, you know, with Hurricane Ian, it could be your neighbor in need. It's not just, you know, this one local community. It could be, you know, your child at that school that you're going to or your next door neighbor that just lost everything. So how do we prepare for that and how do we assist?

00:09:12 Interviewer

And did you also talk about sort of ongoing activities as well as disaster related activities during the meetings or were you really sort of gearing up towards the next disaster?

00:09:25 Respondent

I mean we talked about long term recovery, we talked about, you know, preparing for disaster and what that looked like and then like how do we focus on anything, I guess any current needs maybe.

00:09:44 Interviewer

And did you feel like the services that were offered by CAP and CAP partners were a good fit for the community's cultural needs? Like were there, for example, language needs or food, cultural food needs related to, you know, culturally appropriate food needs? Were the CAP and CAP partners? Were they a good cultural fit for the community?

00:10:08 Respondent

I do. I think that was definitely something that was being worked on pretty well. You know, we were doing some projects in different areas very much geared towards cultural needs.

00:10:22 Interviewer

To.

00:10:22 Respondent

Describe needs can.

00:10:24 Interviewer

You describe some of those projects.

00:10:27 Respondent

We were working on a project for like food access areas and based on a community that lacked a lot of, well, actually almost zero food access and transportation issues and what that could look like for families to get food. And there was no grocery stores there. So we're looking at a locker. So she would. Now we didn't actually go through with this, but what can we do to bring the types of foods that that area would want? And how do we go about doing that in a way that would be, you know, best fit for that community? We're still, no, we're still exploring it, but I feel like at least we're headed in the right direction, you know, because that area does not have a grocery store that does area does not desire the same type of foods that, you know, maybe would work here in more of a city like Fort Myers area. You know, they're in more of a farming type of area. So I think we're exploring that. Are we there yet? No, but at least, you know, we're talking about the what that could look like and how do we need it. We're engaging that community saying, hey, you know, what can we do to do better here?

00:11:43 Interviewer

And you're exploring that as a group through?

00:11:46 Respondent

Through the community and the neighborhood community.

00:11:47 Interviewer

And the neighborhood, that's great. And you're also including the community in those discussions, as well as those nonprofit organizations. Well, that's great. During Hurricanes Helene and Milton, were there any new types of services that were not available during past disasters, for example, during Hurricane Ian?

00:12:12 Respondent

I mean, to the top of my head, I can't think of stuff, but I'm sure there was things that came out of it. Like we did do the different disaster relief services and resiliency hubs that came out of it, both hurricanes, But I can't think of stuff off the top of my head at the moment.

00:12:31 Interviewer

OK, that's OK. So, you know, thinking of the resiliency hubs, were those resiliency hubs used during the disaster and and how were they used?

00:12:43 Respondent

They were, I mean, for different services, you know, whether it was, you know, home repairs, whether it was for crisis relief, food, food needs, clothing needs, just wrap around services in general.

00:13:00 Interviewer

And did people know that the resiliency hubs were available or they were open and available and that was mostly through just word of mouth?

00:13:09 Respondent

Word of mouth. I think it was advertised through the media too.

00:13:14 Interviewer

Great. Did you, did you feel like people got services for as long as people needed them?

00:13:25 Respondent

Yeah, I would think so.

00:13:28 Interviewer

Did you notice that they got services even after some of the, you know, disaster services had ended? So you mentioned, you know, people were working together with long term

recovery. Did people receive the services they needed even after the immediate disaster?

00:13:46 Respondent

They did.

00:13:48 Interviewer

And what kind of services were provided on an ongoing basis?

00:13:53 Respondent

I mean, there's food needs, there's crisis response, housing needs, you know, assistance. I think that we still have ongoing long term recovery needs.

00:14:14 Interviewer

And for those ongoing needs of that, the partners are working together to try to determine how to meet the needs of the community. Did you feel like there were some needs that were unmet after the disaster that were still unmet? Because you had mentioned there are people who are still, you know, there's.

00:14:36 Respondent

Still some, you know, housing needs that are still, you know, not completely met. Yeah, there's still repairs. And so I think we do the best we can, but I think people are still dealing with long term, you know, housing needs.

00:14:56 Interviewer

Do you think that there were any services provided by the cat partners that would not have been delivered if cat partners had not been engaged?

00:15:06 Respondent

I think that there's definitely some resources probably or maybe it wouldn't done as quickly. We people still been waiting even if it comes into like, I mean like, well, I think we did a great job of responding for food resources. Still. I still think there could have been things that maybe would have not been met, you know, because there was such a drastic need. So I think you know the cat partner still provided that additional resource.

00:15:38 Interviewer

Are there any specific resources you can think of?

00:15:44 Respondent

I mean, I think that all of them and there was wrap around services. So I think, you know, you're hitting areas that, you know, there was always a population that could have been, you know, not been able to get served. So I would say all of them, you know, because they were different areas of the county. If people couldn't have access because of maybe transportation barriers. You have a resilient pub there.

00:16:09 Interviewer

And so at the Resilience Hub, they were able to.

00:16:12 Respondent

Get go there. You know, they can't drive across town. There's something in that community, in that neighborhood, which I think made that unique and you know that beneficial.

00:16:25 Interviewer

Do you feel like the CAP and the CAP partners had coordinated well? So you would mention that there there were some mechanisms after hurricane and that were put into place to assist in that coordination. Did the did CAP and CAP partners coordinate well with the rest of the organizations, the local organizations and national organizations in the area?

00:16:45 Respondent

I think so. I mean, I think. I just think the location alone helped them coordinate.

00:16:51 Interviewer

And how did the location help them to do that?

00:16:54 Respondent

I think, you know, just being they were spread out in different neighborhoods and communities that really helped alleviate the transportation barriers for a lot of people.

00:17:07 Interviewer

And and you mentioned that this time there didn't appear to be a lot of duplication of services, did that you know, sort of spread out that the way they were sort of spread out in the community that helped reduce the duplication of services.

00:17:25 Respondent

Say that again.

00:17:27 Interviewer

So you, you had mentioned that that the duplication of services had been reduced this time as a as compared to Hurricane Ian. What were some of the factors related to reducing that duplication? You would mention that, you know, there's some, there's some coalitions and some groups that are now helping to coordinate and that the partners are sort of spread out. Are those factors that help to reduce the duplication of effort or are there additional factors?

00:18:01 Respondent

I mean, I, I think the spread out of it, I think what else? I mean, I think coordination probably too, just being able to speak and talk and have that, you know, and have the Red Cross and



the leaves on being in there to be able to speak to each other too helps.

00:18:23 Interviewer

And are there things that were done in advance? So did you know to go out and talk? Do you have did you have like drills and things like that that helped before the disaster? So what are some things pre disaster do you think help? I don't.

00:18:39 Respondent

Think we did a lot of pre disaster work because I think it came very quickly.

00:18:44 Interviewer

Yeah, yeah.

00:18:46 Respondent

We had a hurricane in September.

00:18:54 Interviewer

From what you observed, did the CAP and CAP partner use their own local supplies, services and volunteers during the response?

00:19:03 Respondent

Yes, they did use.

00:19:08 Interviewer

And did that help because they used their own local resources that help the response move smoothly?

00:19:18 Respondent

I think it helped, yeah.

00:19:24 Interviewer

You had mentioned that some things were able to get to the community quicker. Do you did you find that things happened more people were able to get services more quickly than in the past, like during Hurricane Ian? Yes. And can you just describe what, what facilitated that speed?

00:19:52 Respondent

I mean, I think there was more resources available this time around and and probably because you know the impact of hurricane and prompted more resources.

00:20:06 Interviewer

So in terms of the resources that were available, what were some important resources that were available that facilitated the speed of service delivery?

00:20:20 Respondent

Oh, like I said, I really think the magnitude of the impact of hurricane in really prompted everyone to come out and be like, we have to do something different this time.

00:20:34 Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. And so in terms of, you know, what people were doing differently were the, you know, a top three things that people were doing differently.

00:20:48 Respondent

Responding Yeah.

00:20:49 Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. So some there just wasn't a lot of response during.

00:20:54 Respondent

No, I think everybody, I think planning was different too. Like nobody was prepared for the impact. Nobody thought it was coming. Nobody was worrying about it. You know, this was very different.

00:21:05 Interviewer

Yeah. So just having organizations actually come out and respond that that was a difference.

00:21:16 Respondent

Yeah.

00:21:16 Interviewer

Yeah, yeah. And that helped to speed things up as well. What were some of the impediments? What would can you think of anything that may have slowed things down?

00:21:33 Respondent

This last time and with Helene.

00:21:36 Interviewer

Yeah, with Helene and and Milton.

00:21:47 Respondent

I, I think Helene and Melton was a lot better, but maybe it's just because Hurricane Ian was so chaotic. I'm sure there were things that slowed it down, but I just think the drastic change was so impactful. I don't know. I have to think on that.

00:22:08 Interviewer

OK, great. The next set of questions around recommendations and that you may have for the

program, what kind of things do you think were helpful about CAP and CAP partners during the disaster response? Was it, you mentioned resources, relationships, What were the most important things that that you thought were helpful about CAP and CAP partners during the response?

00:22:37 Respondent

I, I definitely think the resources would be my number one thing. And I think that connection pieces like to other or other partners that just like I said, that's like liaison to really be able to connect people together or groups and organizations.

00:22:58 Interviewer

And that and what were some of the most important ways that the people.

00:23:02 Respondent

Connected. I think it was just almost having everybody on the same page, like making sure everybody knew what everybody was doing. So there wasn't that like going back to that duplication and following up with organizations in the in the midst of a disaster because everybody else is doing so much. They're going at 100% speed all the time and just making sure everybody knows what everybody's doing.

00:23:32 Interviewer

And did you have what what type of things helped during the disaster? Were there like daily check insurance or how did you do that coordination during the disaster?

00:23:41 Respondent

I think there was, sometimes it was daily or even just a follow up after, you know, in a couple of days, you know about what's going on, where he's at on something.

00:23:54 Interviewer

Are there things that worked well during the disaster? And you have mentioned a couple things, but what do you think really should be done again in future disasters? So reflecting back between, particularly between Hurricane Ian and Hurricanes Helene and Melton, what do you think are things that should definitely be done during the next disaster? What should be repeated?

00:24:15 Respondent

I definitely think you know that coordination between partners is is very helpful. Yeah, yeah, I know. I, I go back to, I think I think that's extremely helpful. I think, you know, making sure again, that everybody knows what services are available, you know, and checking in to make sure you know, 'cause sometimes the areas are hit. So maybe those organizations aren't, aren't open. So maybe just making sure what areas are still open for during times of disaster. I think that communication to peace is very important.

00:25:13 Interviewer

And what facilitated the communication? Were there technologies that facilitated or was it just person?

00:25:20 Respondent

I think it's next.

00:25:22 Interviewer

More than more than technical. OK, great. What? What do you think CAP and CAP partners should do differently next time? What could help support the community more?

00:25:45 Respondent

I think it's just continue to build upon program.

00:25:52 Interviewer

And are there any specific ways that you would recommend that the program be that we continue to build on the program?

00:26:07 Respondent

If you look for additional partners.

00:26:17 Interviewer

Is there anything else you'd like to share about how CAP and CAP partners helped during Hurricanes Helene and Milton? Send the additional thoughts.

00:26:35 Respondent

No, I don't think so. I think it was a It was a great program.

00:26:43 Interviewer

Well, thank you very much. Is are there any questions that we should have asked you but we didn't ask you?

00:26:48 Respondent

No, you guys covered a lot. I'm.

00:26:51 Interviewer

Sorry, guys, I hate to grill you about all these, so I hate to feel like, you know, I'm sort of like just bombarding you a question. But thank you so much. We really appreciate all the insights that you brought to us about the program. And your, and I know it was a difficult time and, and, but you know, I, I did get the sense that you learned a lot from hurricanes, hurricane eaten Ian and that helped the coordination with the nonprofit. So that's a really great thing. So we hope that coordination continues in the future.

00:27:22 Respondent

Yes, absolutely. We appreciate it.

00:27:25 Interviewer

Well, thank you so much for your your work and and also your partnership with the American Red Cross and with cap and cap partners. We really appreciate it. I'm going to turn it over to Michael for a second and just see, do you have any clarifying questions or anything you'd like to discuss?

00:27:41 Interviewer2

Thank you. Yeah. Thanks again for all your your answers and your insights. And I maybe have one question. So when you compare and to the last response, you said you were a lot more positive about coordination and about the response in general and about the communication. So I think that's great to hear. Is there anything, so let's say you're talking to a community that is still at the level of responding to a disaster that you were in when it came to hurricane, and what would you recommend that they take as a first step to get to that next level Or what did you do first? Well, how did it start? Do you remember anything that your community did or that happened in your community that made this process start?

00:28:29 Respondent

I think it's more about coming together in the community right after, you know, immediately following the disaster and having a very honest conversation as a community and figuring out what are the needs right now and then what are the needs we have to plan for moving forward.

00:28:53 Interviewer2

And do you remember who organized that initial like idea of coming together and reflecting on, was that just an?

00:29:02 Respondent

So we came together like I know our my organization. So like I helped lead it with United Way and then our local EOC and then we had Red Cross in it too. And then we pulled in some of our additional agency partners to come together as a community to start talking about those conversations. Yeah.

00:29:25 Interviewer2

Yeah, that sounds great. But that was everything that I wanted to know. So thanks again.

00:29:30 Respondent

You're welcome. Thank you guys. I appreciate it.

00:29:33 Interviewer

Well, thank you so much and and you know, if there's any feedback you have or any

questions you have following this interview, please feel free to reach out and, and I might you have my e-mail address from the meeting invitation. So please feel free to reach out at any time.

00:29:50 Respondent

Absolutely, I will. Thank you so much.

00:29:51 Interviewer

Thank you. Have a great.

00:29:53 Respondent

Day you.

00:29:54 Interviewer

Too had a great 4th of July too.

00:29:56 Respondent

You too.

00:29:57 Interviewer2

Right. Take care. Bye.

00:29:59 Interviewer

Bye bye.