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The Future of Disaster Philanthropy

By Marlena Hartz

Disaster philanthropy is at a critical juncture. Around the world, disasters are increasing in frequency and severity, predominantly due to climate change,[1] and their economic and social impact is predicted to reach unprecedented levels within the next four decades. As the threat of disaster intensifies, disaster philanthropy must evolve radically in order for communities and economies to thrive. The private sector is uniquely positioned to apply agility, expertise, and resources to the problem, and thus strengthen the safety and well-being of generations to come. This *Giving Thoughts* article describes challenges and opportunities for corporations willing to step up and reimagine the future of disaster philanthropy.

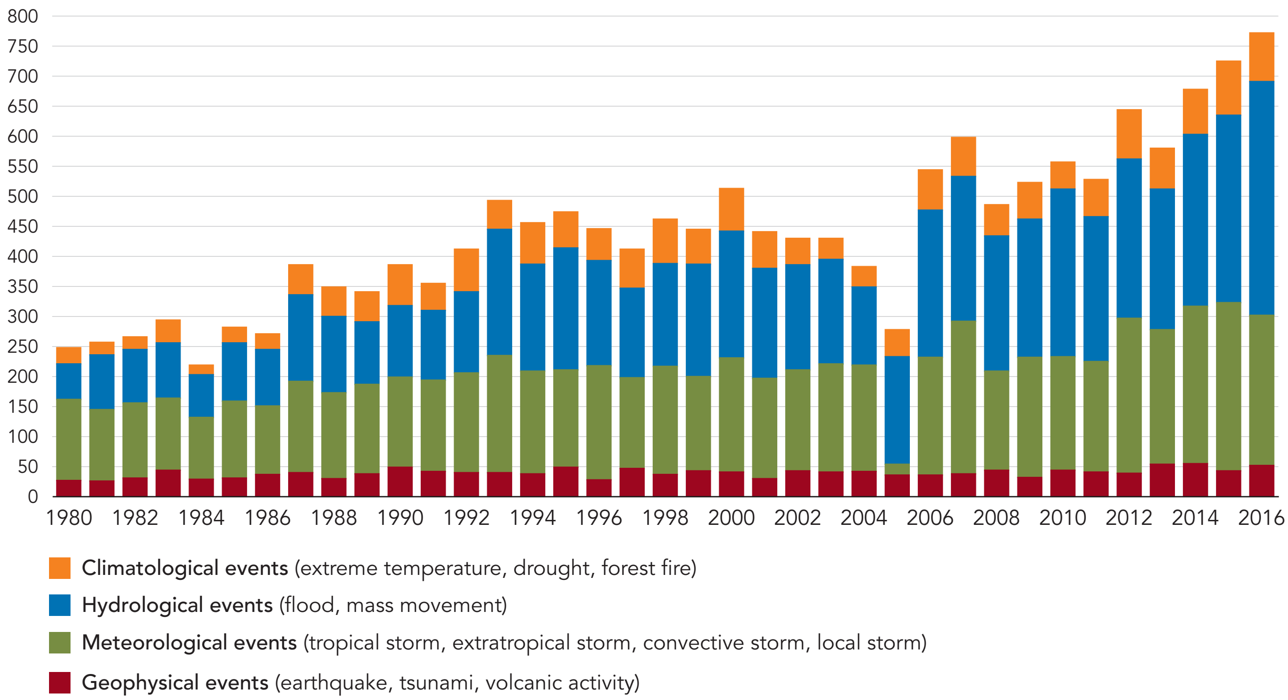
The Challenge

A rising threat

Economic and social consequences The devastating effects of climate change are mounting, and communities around the world are already grappling with the very real consequences. Disasters related to changing temperatures, precipitation, sea levels, and other factors increased 41 percent in 2015 compared with the previous decade's annual average.[2] Worldwide, natural disasters in 2015 resulted in 22,765 deaths, with an additional 110 million affected people.[3] Earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones, flooding, and other climatological disasters now cost the world an average $250 billion to $300 billion every year.[4]

Figure 1

Number of relevant natural loss events (1980–2016)



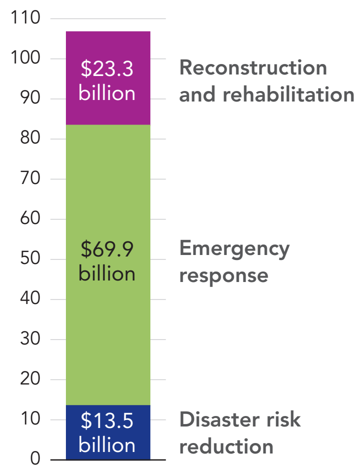
Worldwide, geophysical events, such as earthquakes, have occurred at a steady rate; while, hydrological and climate-related disasters, such as floods and tropical cyclones, have become more prevalent.

Source: MunichRE NatCatSERVICE, 2017.

Poor countries bear the brunt of losses Over the last decade, China, the United States, India, the Philippines, and Indonesia were among countries most frequently hit by natural disasters.[5] Yet, disasters disproportionately devastate low- and middle-income countries: 80 percent of the total life-years lost between 1980 and 2012 are from economically vulnerable nations.[6] The United Nations warns that disasters pose as much of a threat to social and economic development as major diseases like tuberculosis in the developing world.[7] By 2050, it is estimated that 40 percent of the global population will be living in river basins, particularly in Africa and Asia.[8] By 2060, the cost of inaction on climate change is predicted to reach a staggering $44 trillion,[9] with the highest anticipated GDP losses in the Middle-East, Northern, and Sub-Saharan Africa, and South and Southeast Asia.[10] "[These regions] consist of relatively poor, highly populated countries that do not have a high capacity to deal with significant negative impacts," says the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.[11] This level of devastation in already vulnerable regions is by no means inevitable; however, to save lives, action is needed now.

Current approaches are inadequate and misaligned The way that governments, businesses, multilateral agencies, and foundations are approaching disaster recovery and risk reduction is inadequate and misaligned, given the magnitude of the looming crisis. Disaster relief, for example, accounted for just 2 percent of overall corporate giving in 2016, with the vast majority of gifts directed to immediate disaster relief, as opposed to risk reduction.[12] Globally, more than five times as much is spent on response versus reduction (see Figure 2).[13]

Figure 2
Disaster financing (1991–2010)



Source: Overseas Development Institute, 2013

For every $100 spent on development aid, 40 cents has gone into protecting countries from succumbing to natural disasters.[14] According to the United Nations, an annual investment of $6 billion in appropriate disaster risk management strategies could generate risk reduction benefits worth $360 billion.[15] Proactive strategies such as disaster-resilient infrastructure, early warning systems, and risk mapping could save lives and livelihoods. Yet, across sectors, there is relatively little attention paid to these critical activities, which leaves poor communities without recourse when disaster inevitably strikes.

Addressing vulnerability to disasters is important not only from a moral, but an economic standpoint and the health of the private sector is linked with the strength of disaster response and preparedness. The Overseas Development Institute summarizes: "Access to immediate funding and technical support in the aftermath of a disaster helps rebuild critical infrastructure so that people, communities, and economies can bounce back faster."[16] In other words, companies have the potential to regain profitability more quickly if effective disaster strategies are in place across sectors. Investing specifically in disaster prevention and preparedness can be even more prudent, given the steep cost of post-disaster rebuilding and the negative impact of risk-averse stakeholders on growth.[17] The United Nations estimates that every dollar invested into disaster preparedness saves seven dollars in disaster aftermath.[18]

A proactive disaster strategy also has long-lasting public relations benefits. Walmart and several other companies were lauded for their quickly coordinated in-kind and monetary donations to Hurricane Katrina recovery, days later in the press and years later in various post-disaster reflections.[19] In their analysis of the U.S. Government's response to Katrina, two economists from West Virginia University observed: "The private sector's response to Hurricane Katrina was swift and effective when compared to the government's response. Companies like Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and State Farm Insurance made preparations for the impending disaster weeks before Katrina hit, and were willing and able to bring resources to bear on the disaster area days before government agencies could manage to do so."[20]

The case for corporate engagement in disaster recovery and preparedness is strong, yet the sector's engagement in disaster recovery and risk reduction remains disproportionate to need. Companies that strategically engage in disaster philanthropy can have tremendous impact; however, to maximize impact and minimize risk, they should be aware of common barriers to effectiveness.

Barriers to effectiveness

Common barriers to effective corporate disaster philanthropy can be grouped into three broad categories:

- Heightened risk of fraud
- Complex regulatory issues
- Public distrust of traditional institutions

Each category presents unique challenges for companies, especially those that haven't considered their disaster philanthropy strategy in advance of a disaster event.

Risk of fraud In chaotic, post-disaster periods, there is a heightened sense of urgency to act coupled with a higher risk of fraud, which can put companies in a precarious situation. The term "pop-up organization" has been coined to describe organizations hastily set up in the aftermath of a disaster.[21] Although they may be well-intentioned and quite adept at attracting public attention and donations, pop-ups often don't have tax-exempt status, or they may not know enough about the communities in which they operate to be effective, diverting resources from the communities they're trying to help.

Some pop-up organizations, on the other hand, exploit disaster situations for personal gain. After Hurricane Katrina, the FBI investigated 15 illegitimate websites that were designed to look like charities and in Florida, the attorney general moved to shut down two fraudulent websites with Katrina in their names.[22] Even well-established channels for disaster relief are not immune to controversy. In the aftermath of Katrina and Sandy, two independent reports found roughly $740 million of government aid intended for survivors may have been improperly or fraudulently distributed.[23] The risk of aligning with controversial charities or forging public-private alliances too hastily often causes companies to delay disaster philanthropy or forgo it altogether.

Regulatory issues Ensuring aid actually reaches disaster survivors abroad comes with even greater challenges. In the critical days following a devastating 7.8-magnitude earthquake in Nepal, much of the funding reportedly couldn't reach the hardest-hit, remote areas of the country in the greatest time of need. Aid workers cited widespread issues regarding customs restrictions, import taxes, and government regulations on the flow of aid to nonprofits.[24] In fact, regulatory issues around the world are a growing burden for disaster philanthropists.[25] More than 50 countries now have laws that prohibit or restrict overseas funding of nonprofits and many of the regulations have been enacted or tightened within the last two years by autocratic regimes.[26] Financing is another hurdle. Banks are "increasingly hesitant to conduct business with charities that work in disaster zones for fear that they could be caught up in funding international terrorism," according to Rob Kunzia of *The Washington Post*.[27]

Even major international nonprofit relief efforts can be hampered by regulatory challenges. When a 7.0-magnitude earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010, countries and charities raised an unprecedented $13.5 billion to help the impoverished nation rebuild.[28] However, the historic fundraising boon was overshadowed in 2015 by NPR and ProPublica investigations, which cast doubt on the effectiveness of major charity-led rebuilding efforts.

The American Red Cross cited regulatory issues involving land rights as one of the biggest barriers to its unmet plans to build homes in the country.[29] USAID similarly fell short of its housing goals—three years after the earthquake hit, the organization had scaled down its plan to build houses from 15,000 to 2,649.[30] The scaled-down goal was not met by 2015. In her analysis of the housing issue, development analyst Cynthia Kao praised the approach of Dutch nonprofit Cordaid: "For its rural program, the organization contracted and trained local tradesmen to repair 204 houses, thus rehousing 308 returning families by March of 2012: just short of its 340 families rehousing goal. Additionally, most, if not all, housing materials were purchased locally. A focused effort towards improving livelihoods within communities while providing aid was visible in its methodology. Cordaid actively sought to build social capital, a priority that did not hinder aid delivery timeliness, and to engage local partners."[31]

Not only did challenges in Haiti thwart 2010 relief efforts, they had lasting effects on the public's trust of traditional disaster relief efforts. On October 4, 2016, disaster hit Haiti again. Hurricane Matthew killed more than 1,000 people and caused an estimated $1 billion in damage. Days later, an article in *The Guardian* questioned whether "aid predators would ravage Haiti."[32] Other major news outlets, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*, published similar articles, questioning the effectiveness of internationally led recovery efforts. In this volatile environment, it can be difficult for companies to see how they can have a timely, meaningful impact in the wake of a disaster, and the private sector's overall reticence to engage in disaster philanthropy is exacerbated.

The trust crisis As the demand for novel solutions and risk reduction rises across sectors, public trust in traditional institutions is at an all-time low, posing significant risks and opportunities for businesses that want to contribute.[33] Trust in business, government, NGOs, and media broadly declined in 2017, falling below 50 percent in two-thirds of countries surveyed for the 2017 Edelman Trust Barometer. This is the first time trust in all four major institutions has dropped since Edelman began its tracking in 2012. Perceived credibility of leadership also declined, with only 37 percent of the general population saying CEOs were credible and 29 percent saying the same about government officials.

To build and maintain customer trust, Edelman advises businesses to step out of traditional siloes and help solve issues in their communities of operation. Not acting isn't a sound strategy. Edelman says: "Three out of four general population respondents [to the Edelman survey] agree that a company can take actions that both increase profits and improve the economic and social conditions in the community where it operates."[34]

An extensive study sponsored in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation likewise found that public attitudes towards international development are increasingly negative.[35] However, framing communications about development activities, such as disaster recovery, around four themes (independence, shared values, partnership, and progress) can shift public perspectives among those that are engaged, but unsure of the development sector's impact. For corporate philanthropists interested or engaged in post-disaster international development, this is an instructive finding. In particular, one theme—partnership, specifically with local nonprofits and employee stakeholders—is increasingly understood as essential to success in disaster philanthropy.

Solutions

The promise of locally driven partnerships

In his analysis of aid lessons from Haiti, John Mitchell, the director of an international network of humanitarian agencies, said: "The coping strategies of local people were overlooked. Opportunities to support local businesses were missed."[36] There is growing recognition in the social sector of the centrality of local people to effective disaster philanthropy. A post-summit analysis of the United Nations World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 read: "People affected by crises or living in situations of risk are rights-holders who must be put at the centre of decision-making processes."[37]

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also focused its *2015 World Disasters Report* on the crucial role of local residents. In the report's foreword, Secretary General Elhadj As Sy said: "Because [local actors] are present in communities before a crisis hits, they see it not as an event in and of itself, but as something that is linked to the past, to unaddressed risks, vulnerabilities and inequalities. Emergencies—disasters, health crises, even conflicts—are not beginnings or ends, no matter how severe. They are moments that need to be overcome; simply overcoming them, however, will not put an end to the challenges faced by communities. Local actors are uniquely placed to find solutions that reduce underlying risks because of their understanding of local contexts—of weather patterns, of community leaders, of vulnerabilities and of sources of strength. They are able to support communities to pre-empt and address future crises and threats, and to become stronger and more resilient in the process."[38]

Investing in locals' capacity is now considered one of the best ways to bolster a community's resilience against future disasters. Alarmingly, despite consensus about the importance of local actors to effective humanitarian aid, operational realities have yet to align. Only 3 percent of international aid funding was channeled directly to affected governments from 2004 to 2015, and only 1.6 percent went to local nonprofits.[39]

A look at successful local partnerships

In cases when corporations are able to close the gulf between best practices and actual disaster funding, promising results are achieved. For example, UN-managed, country-based pooled funds—which offer a mechanism for governments and private donors to pool their contributions to address specific emergencies—are growing in popularity as a solution for donors who are unable to directly fund or assess local implementing partners because of timing constraints, regulatory issues, or other risk factors.

About $85 million was allocated to local nonprofits in 2015 through these UN-pooled funds—almost twice the amount reported as provided directly to local nonprofits in that same year.[40] The focus for the pooled funds is set at the country level, and the system is designed to be able to shift rapidly in response to volatile situations and propel solutions identified by local partners.

Coca-Cola's strategic response to a 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami offers another example of the benefits of locally driven disaster relief. Typically, the aid community discourages in-kind donations in the difficult aftermath of a natural disaster because they often go to waste, or worse yet, slow down relief efforts.

Warnings against unsolicited in-kind donations went unheeded after the 2004 disaster and a large number of inappropriate items (including used Western clothes, baked beans, and soda) wasted airplane fuel, cluttered warehouses, and remained unclaimed for months.[41] But Coca-Cola, along with several other corporations, leveraged their existing operations in the region to contribute significantly to relief efforts, as chronicled by *Harvard Business Review*: "The difference was that these firms had established relationships with aid agencies well before the tsunami struck. Coca-Cola, for example, has for years maintained relationships with the Red Cross and other aid agencies in many countries. Working with local subsidiaries, Coca-Cola converted its soft-drink production lines to bottle huge quantities of drinking water and used its own distribution network to deliver it to relief sites. Similarly, British Airways, UPS, FedEx, and DHL all worked with their existing aid agency partners to furnish free or subsidized transportation for relief cargo."

Expanding the Nexus of Decision-Making

Employees as major stakeholders

When 3M, a large multinational corporation that employs more than 91,000 people in 70+ countries, asked their employees what causes they cared about, disaster relief emerged as a top area of concern.[42] Listening and responding to employee concerns is imperative in today's trust-deficient business environment. "The best companies," asserts Ben Boyd, chief executive officer of Edelman Canada and Latin America, "are deeply listening and strategically integrating [employee] insights to help shape the future of their business."[43]

More and more multinational corporations, including Ford, Hilton Worldwide, Gap, and Nike, are partnering with organizations like GlobalGiving to develop agile, customized disaster response plans that engage employees and build the capacity of locally driven nonprofits in their diverse regions of operation. These companies rely on the wisdom of the crowd—in this case employees with extensive knowledge about the locations where they live and work—to make decisions about what locally driven disaster-related projects to support. To engage their employees, they often distribute gift cards—redeemable on GlobalGiving—to celebrate work milestones or match employee donations to disaster projects. By expanding the nexus of decision-making, they strengthen their communities of operation and inoculate themselves from risk.

The steep price of non-engagement

Gallup estimates that U.S. employees who fall into the "not engaged" and "actively disengaged" categories cost their companies $319 billion to $398 billion annually.[44] Philanthropy in the workplace is one solution: Researchers found that bank employees who were given $50 to donate to a charity were happier and more satisfied with their jobs as compared to employees who did not donate.[45] Millennials in particular are attracted to companies with social responsibility ethics—more than 50 percent say they would take a pay cut to find work that matches their values,[46] while 94 percent want to use their skills for good.[47]

New Standards of Excellence

Three case studies below exemplify how corporations and foundations are setting new standards of excellence in disaster philanthropy by putting employees and locally driven organizations at the center of their giving strategies.

GIVING PROFILE

Eli Lilly and Company Foundation

The Eli Lilly and Company Foundation is a tax-exempt, private foundation established by the global pharmaceutical company in 1968. The foundation awards cash grants for philanthropic initiatives aligned with the company's corporate responsibility priorities. For the foundation, involving its employees in its giving strategies is a central component of its mission to improve the lives of people in low and middle-income countries.[48]

In 2011, Lilly partnered with GlobalGiving to build a custom giving website for its international giving program, which allows Lilly employees from anywhere in the world to donate to vetted international charities within Lilly's five philanthropic focus areas: health, hunger, environment, education, and disaster. Employees are able to support local nonprofits in the communities where they operate, and the foundation matches all employee donations of $25 or more.

The organization's collective prioritization of disaster recovery is remarkable. About 65 percent of all Lilly donations made through GlobalGiving are designated for disaster recovery projects, a ratio that stands in stark contrast to average corporate disaster giving, which is calculated at just 2 percent.[49]

GlobalGiving partner IsraAID provides care to typhoon survivors in the Philippines.

To date, Lilly employees have donated more than $270,000 to disaster-related projects via GlobalGiving. Combined with the foundation match, this has resulted in more than $500,000 in gifts to disaster-related projects. The efficiency of the Lilly system is also noteworthy: when disaster strikes, related projects are featured on a special tab within the employee giving portal. Corporate communications often go out to all employees internally after a major disaster with a link to associated projects and the Lilly match is automatically added to eligible donations without the need for additional coordination by employees.

Having an existing infrastructure for disaster giving with the ability to feature vetted charities in virtually any region has reduced the administrative burden on the Lilly Foundation when disasters strike and increased local giving choices for employees in regions where Lilly operates. When Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines, where Lilly has an office, Lilly employees were especially generous, making nearly 1,000 donations within one month, which totaled $160,000 with the Lilly match.

GIVING PROFILE

Discovery Communications

Discovery Impact is an arm of the global media company Discovery Communications. Its mission is to leverage the power of Discovery brands, businesses, and employees to give back to the world. To achieve its mission, Discovery Impact focuses primarily on inspiring programming, cause-related partnerships, and annual events that celebrate, support, and sustain people, animals, and the Earth’s natural beauty.

Aura Freedom International is raising funds on GlobalGiving to rebuild a secondary school that was damaged during the 2015 earthquake in Nepal.

Discovery Impact quickly mobilized on the morning of April 25, 2015, when a powerful 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck Nepal. The earthquake took the lives of nearly 9,000 people and decimated homes and historic sites in the Himalayan nation. An estimated $10 billion—half of the country's national GDP—would be required to meet reconstruction needs. In less than one week, Discovery Impact offered Discovery employees a way to give to Nepal. "The Discovery family is deeply saddened by the tragic earthquake and the loss of life among the Nepali people and the Himalayan climbing community," reads an entry on the Discovery corporate blog.

A GlobalGiving partner since 2009, Discovery directed its employees to GlobalGiving's Nepal Earthquake Relief and Recovery Fund on the blog and elsewhere. Through a direct donation and 1:1 employee match, Discovery and its employees donated nearly $300,000 to relief efforts in Nepal. Some employees used GlobalGiving gift cards that Discovery had given them during the holidays to support the relief fund.

All donors continue to receive quarterly reports on the impact of their gifts, a requirement of all GlobalGiving implementing partners. Employees have expressed pride at their employer's engagement in social issues. "I am extremely proud to work for an organization like Discovery Communications [that] supports and encourages their employees to contribute to creating positive changes around the world," one employee told GlobalGiving. Another employee noted: "I feel special that I work for a company that allows me to donate company funds to a cause of my choice."

To date, nearly 40,000 unique donors in over 100 countries have raised more than $6 million for GlobalGiving's Nepal Earthquake Relief and Recovery Fund. The donations have been distributed to nearly 100 locally driven organizations engaged in immediate disaster relief and long-term recovery efforts in Nepal.

GIVING PROFILE

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is a nonpartisan, private charitable foundation established in 1966. One of its primary objectives is to improve lives and livelihoods in developing countries.[50] While the Hewlett Foundation does not customarily give grants for emergency response, it recognized the 2014-2016 Ebola crisis as an overarching threat to many of its objectives in West Africa, such as reproductive health, citizen voice, and accountable governance. For this reason, it made a one-time commitment of $5 million for Ebola response.

Recognizing its own limitations in quickly identifying and reaching community-based organizations in the region, Hewlett turned to GlobalGiving. With Hewlett's support, GlobalGiving distributed nine grants to locally driven nonprofit partners in West Africa ranging from $5,000 to $150,000. The grants were awarded to partners with a history of impact in the region and innovative approaches to Ebola treatment, prevention, and survivor services.

Rising Academies received a $10,000 grant to provide in-home Ebola awareness education while schools were closed in Sierra Leone due to Ebola.

Three of the grantees, Imani House, IsraAID, and Solon Foundation, supplemented their Hewlett grants with participation in a pilot program to test the impact of novel technological solutions in disaster recovery. The nonprofits were given pro-bono access to a mobile app developed by a South African firm, along with free customization services and smartphones to run the app for their staff. The organizations used the app to monitor the psychological wellness of health workers in the field, coordinate the distribution of medical supplies, and track student attendance at schools with at-risk populations.[51] The app also facilitated the collection of vital data in a dangerous environment where physical copies of records were at risk of being contaminated and burned.[52]

One user, Kidsave International project coordinator Prerana Pakhrin, said the app enhanced her nonprofit's efficiency at the height of the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, as data could be recorded in remote locations without an internet connection and downloaded later once a connection was re-established.[53] Pakhrin said investing in technology like the app is cost-prohibitive for Kidsave and small, locally driven nonprofits without the help of foundations and other investors like the Hewlett Foundation. "It takes a very long time if you are trying to do it in a cost-effective way," she said.

Conclusion

Successful disaster philanthropy is not only possible, it's happening thanks to bold companies and foundations that are building meaningful relationships with at-risk communities around the world in partnership with GlobalGiving and other innovators.

To make their communities of operation more resilient in an ever-perilous era of intensifying disasters, companies should seek partners and mechanisms that allow them to overcome the toughest barriers to effective disaster philanthropy, including heightened risk of fraud, complex regulatory issues, and rising distrust of traditional institutions. In particular, companies that seize opportunities to partner with locally driven nonprofits and expand the nexus of decision-making to employee stakeholders will be better positioned to avoid philanthropy pitfalls of the past and reduce the threat of disaster for all people in the near and far future.

About GlobalGiving

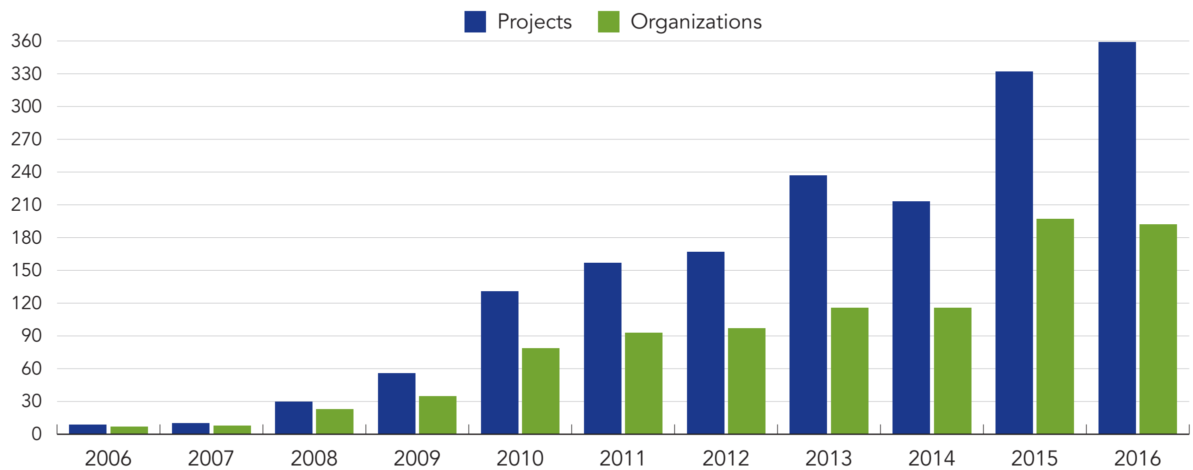
Founded in 2002, GlobalGiving is the oldest and largest global crowdfunding community for nonprofits, companies, and donors. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, GlobalGiving is a recognized leader in locally driven disaster philanthropy solutions.

The community's size and structure make it an ideal intermediary for corporations and foundations interested in local solutions to global problems. To date, more than $250 million has been raised for more than 16,000 projects in 166 countries through the GlobalGiving marketplace, which includes funding from more than 190 leading companies and foundations.

Since 2006, direct corporate contributions have accounted for about 43 percent of total dollars raised on GlobalGiving (excluding corporate gift cards). More than 100 companies have specifically turned to GlobalGiving to invest in disaster philanthropy. In this 10-year period, the number of projects receiving disaster-related support through GlobalGiving has increased nearly 40 times (see Figure. 3), and the GlobalGiving community has raised more than $33.5 million for disaster recovery efforts in more than 58 countries. As one corporate partner remarked: "The VMware Foundation has worked with GlobalGiving for natural disaster responses because of the variety of locally driven nonprofits VMware people can choose to support—in their immediate work as first responders, as well as long-term recovery efforts after the headlines have faded."

Figure 3

GlobalGiving disaster philanthropy by number of projects and organizations (2006–2016)



Source: GlobalGiving, 2017.

How it works

In the difficult, disordered days that follow a disaster, companies that partner with GlobalGiving avoid the time-consuming due diligence process because all of GlobalGiving's nonprofit partners are fully vetted. They also leverage a vast network of existing GlobalGiving nonprofit partners in nearly every country in the world that have already provided documentation of their social impact. Every two years, GlobalGiving conducts thorough due diligence renewal on all partner organizations and strives to visit partners in person. This structure enables GlobalGiving to establish meaningful partnerships with locally driven organizations independently of a disaster and helps companies quickly overcome traditional disaster philanthropy barriers.

Most of GlobalGiving's disaster relief funds begin receiving donations within less than two hours of setup, and on average, GlobalGiving makes its first disbursement of funds to vetted, locally driven partners within two weeks. The short timeframe is remarkable for many small, local nonprofits that cite delayed disbursement of funds as one of their biggest challenges in disaster recovery—some partners have reported waiting several months to a year to receive mainstream grants for recovery work.

In it for the long haul

The GlobalGiving marketplace is also helping communities become more resilient against future disasters. GlobalGiving's disaster funds, which accept donations for distribution to locally driven projects in disaster-affected regions, continue to receive donations, on average, for about two years after a natural disaster occurs. Other funds are active much longer.

GlobalGiving's 2011 Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Relief Fund, for example, is still raising funds six years after the tsunami to support a range of long-term projects that will help Japan withstand future disasters. One long-term project by OISCA International is raising money to plant 500,000 Black Pine seedlings on the coast. The Black Pines will become a natural shield from destructive, salty winds and sandstorms, and the project creates jobs for Japanese farmers displaced by the tsunami. Another fund-supported project, led by Japan Emergency NGO (JEN), builds the long-term leadership capacity of women tsunami survivors. JEN believes their leadership will make the whole community more resilient against future disasters.

Communities in the Philippines are likewise turning to GlobalGiving to prepare for destructive floods. Many coastal communities in the low-lying country are vulnerable to flooding each year during the monsoon season, and the risk is only predicted to become more acute in the future due to climate change. De La Salle University, located in Manila, is funding a project on GlobalGiving to adopt a more proactive, integrated approach to disaster management, which includes the development of comprehensive disaster response plans and closer coordination between government agencies and private institutions in flood-prone regions.

Led by local partners such as OISCA International, JEN, and DeSalle University, the GlobalGiving community of nonprofits, donors, and companies is stepping up and reimagining the future of disaster philanthropy. Their unwavering innovation, commitment, and perseverance in the fight to stop climate change and reduce the devastating impact of disasters on lives and livelihoods has never been more important.

For more information, visit www.globalgiving.org/disasters.

About the Author

Marlena Hartz is the publications manager at GlobalGiving. In this role, she produces publications for the GlobalGiving community of companies, nonprofits, and donors and serves as chief editor for "Learn," an online resources library on www.globalgiving.org. Hartz is a graduate of the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Denver, where she received a National Press Club fellowship for her studies and earned her master's degree in International and Intercultural Communications with an emphasis in human rights.

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