



**American
Red Cross**

Mexico Earthquakes

Three-Year Update | April 2021

Supporting Emergency Relief Efforts for Earthquake Survivors

When devastating earthquakes struck Mexico in September 2017, they caused heartbreaking destruction from southern to central Mexico, including Mexico City. These massive quakes killed hundreds and injured thousands more, while also resulting in widespread severe damage to homes and infrastructure.

In response, Mexican Red Cross disaster teams—including more than 31,000 volunteers—sprang into action. They searched for survivors amid the rubble of toppled buildings, transported injured survivors to hospitals and provided immediate first aid in devastated communities.

Powered by the generosity of compassionate donors, the American Red Cross provided significant financial support for these Mexican Red Cross-led emergency relief efforts. American Red Cross funds provided affected families with cots and kitchen sets (containing pots, pans, cooking utensils, plates and bowls)—and aided the delivery of food, water, shelter, medical assistance, temporary shelter, emotional support and mental health services, personal hygiene items, household clean-up kits, blankets, mattresses, stoves and more.

Emergency Response At-A-Glance

Along with rescue and first aid for survivors, the Mexican Red Cross delivered critical relief to people impacted by these massive quakes, providing food, water and nearly 5,000 tons of relief items. These supplies addressed basic needs like sanitation, meal preparation, shelter and transportation—including:



500,000 hygiene
and cleanup kits



40,000 kitchen kits



30,000 cots



6,000 bicycles to aid
emergency response



5,000 tents, tarps and
temporary shelters

Above: A school in Morelos, Mexico is safer thanks to a disaster response team, which was funded and trained by the Red Cross. The team is comprised of teachers, community members and students, like Anthony, who received training to prepare them for future emergencies. Photo by Brad Zerivitz/American Red Cross

Funding Improved Disaster Preparedness and Response Capacity

Since the earthquakes struck, survivors have worked to rebuild their lives and become more resilient against future disasters, aided by ongoing recovery support from the Red Cross. As part of these efforts, generous American Red Cross donors helped fund programs to improve community and institutional preparedness and response capacity in earthquake-affected areas. These programs cover 20 communities across four states (Morelos, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Puebla), enhancing families' recovery by building safer and more resilient populations and a stronger Mexican Red Cross.

Over the last two years, we have partnered with the Mexican Red Cross to develop disaster preparedness activities across the targeted areas, expanding and adding to interventions carried out through an existing partnership with the Canadian Red Cross. Through a series of resiliency activities made possible by financial support from the American Red Cross, people living in these disaster-prone communities are empowered to learn skills that prepare them for future disasters.

From providing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) education to offering trainings on how to respond during a disaster and administer first aid, the Red Cross is equipping local residents to take the lead in making their communities better prepared and more resilient against future crises.

For example, in San Mateo del Mar, a coastal town in Oaxaca, Red Cross WASH training and education efforts included creating a hygiene and sanitation volunteer team, comprised of community members, to pick up garbage in flood-prone areas. The town had a buildup of garbage—from plastic bottles to earthquake debris from 2017—scattered throughout the community. Given the neighborhood's proximity to the ocean, volunteers removed waste that could lead to vector-borne diseases transmitted by mosquitos—like dengue and Zika—should flooding occur in the area.

"I want to do my part to help clean my community," said Carolina Baloes Iturrigaray, a volunteer and mother of three. "I'm doing this for my children and for the people who live here."

Along with sanitation and hygiene education efforts to improve public health, the Mexican Red Cross has also implemented disaster risk reduction programs that will make residents less vulnerable to future crises. With American Red Cross support, they have helped residents in San Mateo del Mar and other earthquake-impacted



High school students in San Mateo del Mar, a coastal town in Oaxaca, Mexico, participate in a program supported by the Red Cross that helps them understand what to do in case of an emergency. Photo by Brad Zerivitz/American Red Cross

communities identify safe evacuation routes, taught school children preparedness skills so they know what to do when disasters strike, and trained community members on basic search-and-rescue and first aid.

In the state of Morelos, an elementary school is now safer thanks to one of these Red Cross-supported disaster response teams. The team consists of teachers, community members and students who have received training to help them be prepared for future disasters and emergencies. Thanks to support from the Red Cross, this disaster team now knows how to provide first aid and how to get students to safer grounds should a disaster hit the area.

"I feel good. I feel like I know more, thanks to the Red Cross," said Anthony, 9, a student member of the school's response team. "They taught me step-by-step how to treat injuries and how to use a first aid kit," he added.

With funding from the American Red Cross, the Mexican Red Cross has also improved and expanded its capabilities for large-scale relief and recovery efforts. The Mexican Red Cross has purchased search-and-rescue equipment and carried out related training to increase their staff and volunteer capacity in disaster preparedness and resilience activities, as well as to improve the institutional response capabilities of the Mexican Red Cross. In addition, we have also provided funds for the Mexican Red Cross to purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) for earthquake recovery personnel, so these workers can continue safely serving affected communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Azucena Lara Castro was at her home in Morelos when an earthquake hit Mexico in 2017. She remembers the fear she felt as she walked outside her neighborhood to observe the devastation around her. She felt helpless and scared for her loved ones. Today, Azucena takes charge of her future and is a disaster response volunteer in her community.

Through support from the Red Cross, Azucena gained skills to empower her neighbors to take charge of their lives, too. Through training she's learned how to evacuate her neighbors, administer first aid and prepare her own loved ones for future disasters.

"I am extremely grateful for the Red Cross," she said. "They gave us education and skills that we use to help our community."



Azucena Lara Castro (right) shares with Red Cross worker, Stephanie Rendon, her experience of becoming a disaster response volunteer after an earthquake struck her community in 2017. Through an American Red Cross-funded program, she received preparedness training that she is grateful to share with her community. Photo by Brad Zerivitz/American Red Cross

Generous Supporters Enable Mexico Earthquakes Relief, Recovery and Preparedness

Thanks to contributions from our generous supporters, the American Red Cross has raised \$15.6 million to help survivors of the September 2017 earthquakes in Mexico. As of December 31, 2020, the American Red Cross had spent approximately \$11.5 million to support emergency relief, recovery and preparedness efforts led by the Mexican Red Cross for people and communities impacted by these devastating earthquakes. Remaining program funds will be used to continue supporting affected populations, helping them build community resilience through training, equipment and disaster preparedness activities, especially for earthquakes.

These activities encompass mitigation and recovery actions to be identified with communities, including identifying methods to access safe water and shelter during an emergency as well as training in risk reduction activities. We will also support the implementation of a cash transfer program to aid the recovery of families in earthquake-affected areas. In addition, we will continue to support and strengthen the Mexican Red Cross Search and Rescue Unit with training and equipment to assist communities in during future disasters.



In Metepec, a city in Morelos, Mexico, residents are at risk of several potential disasters like volcano eruptions, earthquakes and forest fires. Through support from the Red Cross, disaster response volunteers are equipped with training and skills that allow them to conduct disaster simulations to help prepare their communities for potential disasters. Photo by Brad Zerivitz/American Red Cross

2017 Mexico Earthquake Spent and Programmed (in millions)

As of Dec 31, 2020 (\$15.6M raised)

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Community Recovery and Preparedness	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food, and other relief items	\$ 4.7	–	\$4.7	40.7%
Deployment and maintenance of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$0.1	\$0.1	\$0.2	1.7%
Freight and warehousing	\$0.6	–	\$0.6	5.2%
IT, communications, and call centers	–	\$0.2	\$0.2	1.7%
Direct services program and support salaries	\$1.1	\$0.6	\$1.7	14.7%
Other program and program support costs	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$0.4	3.5%
Reconstruction and construction of response and relief resources	–	\$1.1	\$1.1	9.5%
Workshops, Trainings and planning to increase community resiliency	–	\$0.9	\$0.9	7.8%
Equipment & supplies for community resiliency	–	\$0.7	\$0.7	6.1%
Total Program Expenses	\$6.7	\$3.8	\$10.5	91.0%
Management, general and fundraising ¹			\$1.0	9.0%
Total Spent and Programmed			\$11.5	
Program Dollars Remaining ²			\$3.7	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied			\$0.4	
Total Budget			\$15.6	

¹Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support our approximately 18,500 employees and more than 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. 91 cents of every dollar received for the 2017 Mexico Earthquakes will be spent on our services to help people affected by the 2017 Mexico Earthquakes.

Thank you!

The American Red Cross responds to disasters around the world by mobilizing cash support, pre-positioning relief supplies, deploying disaster response experts and in some cases, implementing recovery and preparedness programs. The remarkable generosity of our supporters—individuals, corporations and foundations—drives our ability to provide relief and assist our partners in the global Red Cross network. We are grateful for your trust.