

## **The World's Largest Humanitarian Network**

The American Red Cross extends its humanitarian mission around the world through its work as part of the global Red Cross network – the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 186 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.

With more than 97 million volunteers, members, and staff, we use our presence in nearly every community to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the world's hardest-to-reach and most vulnerable populations.



Preparedness save lives. Together with early warning messages delivered by Bangladesh Red Crescent volunteers, this shelter provided refuge to communities when Cyclone Sidr hit in 2007. The difference was tangible: the last major cyclone in 1991 killed 140,000 people, compared to 3,300 killed by Cyclone Sidr.

## **How You Can Help**

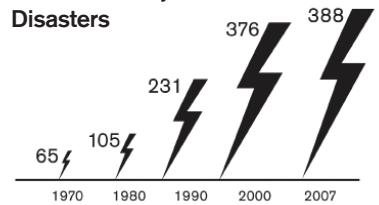
You can help those affected by countless crises around the world each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross International Response Fund, which will provide immediate relief and long-term support through supplies, technical assistance and other support to help those in need.

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting [Redcross.org](http://Redcross.org).

## **A Growing Global Need**

Global trends such as rapid population growth, unplanned urbanization, environmental degradation and climate change have caused an increase in the frequency and severity of natural disasters. Already vulnerable communities are at greater risk of losing family members, homes and livelihoods.

**Number of Major  
Disasters**



Source: Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)

The American Red Cross is expanding support for international disaster preparedness and risk reduction programs. These activities not only save lives but also reduce the costs of recovering from disasters. We are investing resources to strengthen household resiliency and build community capacity to anticipate, mitigate, prepare for and respond to disasters.

## **Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction**

Community members are typically the first people to respond when disaster strikes. The American Red Cross aims to strengthen the capacity of vulnerable communities in disaster-prone regions to be better informed and prepared to mitigate and respond to potential emergencies.

Preparedness programs include working with communities to better understand the risks facing the community; developing community action plans such as evacuation routes and emergency shelters; and identifying cost-effective early warning systems to better predict and react to threats.

Where possible, we work to identify projects that mitigate against disasters, such as planting trees, building flood embankments, improving drainage systems or building hazard-resistant houses.

We are currently supporting preparedness activities across 25 countries.

## **Organizational Readiness to Respond**

The American Red Cross and our national society partners deliver urgent relief at the scene of devastating disasters. We work hard to ensure that our relief teams are adequately equipped and have the skills to effectively assist and guide the disaster response.

We invest resources in strategically pre-positioning relief items for rapid deployment, providing disaster management trainings to build and maintain a roster of skilled disaster responders and building technical expertise to better identify risks and predict events.

We also build the capacity of our partners to prepare for and respond to disasters through trainings, financial and material resources and technical support. Last year, we provided this support to 40 Red Cross and Red Crescent partners.

**For more information, please visit [www.redcross.org/international](http://www.redcross.org/international).**