

Global Humanitarian Response

Building Resiliency Beyond Emergency Relief

There is no shortage of disasters taking place around the world. The ever-increasing number of natural disasters reflects a long-term trend – more disasters that are increasingly severe and that disproportionately affect the most vulnerable. Similarly, man-made crises continue to proliferate. Not only do disasters create humanitarian crises, they also threaten long-term development.



2015 May - Sanagaun, Nepal. Aishwarya Rana, walks through a village whose residents received Mercy Corps emergency relief kits. Photo: Miguel Samper for Mercy Corps

A Dedicated Team Leading Positive Change

Mercy Corps' Strategic Response and Global Emergencies (SRGE) unit works to help communities recover quickly from disasters with limited loss of life and human suffering, and with a solid foundation for a brighter future through secure, productive and just development.

Despite the destruction and devastation that occurs during a disaster, Mercy Corps has seen that these times of turmoil and tragedy also present a unique opportunity for positive change. Mercy Corps adds its greatest value by supporting those kernels of positive change with community-led and market-driven action from the earliest possible moment in emergencies.

Mercy Corps created its emergency response unit in 2000 with a mandate to provide immediate emergency relief while identifying early recovery

opportunities to help people build better lives and transform their communities for good.

Since then, Mercy Corps has become a recognized leader in responding to disasters under some of the world's most difficult conditions. Members of our SRGE team have deployed in more than 53 international emergencies across 43 different countries. In 17 of those countries, our initial emergency response served as the foundation for a new country program.

SRGE Team Our team has access to experts in water and sanitation, operations and logistics,

The feeling of being at the forefront of humanitarian action is one of deep humility and resolve. It's humbling to be so vulnerable to shocks. It reminds you at your core of the human condition. Your resolve comes from the need to do better, faster, more meaningful work.

— Michael Bowers, Vice President, Humanitarian Leadership and Response

economic recovery, program design, relief distribution and the gamut of cross-cutting skills needed in emergency operations, ranging from the rapid assessment and application of humanitarian standards to staff security and emergency program management. The team provides technical support, added capacity and coordination to Mercy Corps' response overall.

All-of-Agency Response Mercy Corps' humanitarian emergency work involves implementing an all-of-agency strategic approach to increase quality and accountability. Any emergency response involves elements of the entire agency, forming an interdependent model of matrix teams drawn from the Regional Program Team, Technical Support Unit, Social Innovations, Policy and Advocacy, International Finance, Human Resources, Security and country offices. All departments have particular and coordinated roles to play in a response and in strengthening our emergency work.

Early Recovery Mercy Corps has demonstrated expertise and leadership in the early application of programming that moves communities from relief toward recovery. We support and tap into market mechanisms that can quicken the transition to development programming. Our approach includes market-based reconstruction methodologies that inject cash into local economies, support locally prioritized reconstruction and enhance the self-reliance of community participants.

Working in Coordination Mercy Corps works within the established UN cluster system, which is organized around eleven sectors of humanitarian action with the goal of improving response effectiveness and quickly addressing program gaps. To ensure that our work meets local needs and priorities, we partner with local NGOs and other local organizations. To help local economies recover as quickly as possible, we involve local businesses and purchase emergency supplies from local vendors.

Mediterranean Refugee Crisis 2015-2016

One million refugees and migrants arrived in Europe by sea in 2015, with eight out of every ten landing on Greece's Aegean Islands. Roughly half originate from Syria and for years, Mercy Corps has been working to relieve the intense suffering of civilians in Syria as well as refugees in neighboring countries. We extended our operations to Europe to help refugees by providing food, protection, shelter, winter supplies, cash, and key information.

Nepal Earthquake 2015

We have reached more than 68,000 people with emergency relief since the 2015 earthquake. SRGE deployed over half of its team in the first three months to work with the dedicated local country team and support their efforts to respond.

Liberia Ebola Response, 2014

Mercy Corps worked with trusted community leaders throughout Liberia to equip two million people — half of the country's population — with accurate facts and critical health messages to stem the spread of Ebola. In partnership with global health organization PSI, our response focused on making accurate and up-to-date information accessible and credible, using materials developed by experts at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the U.N. We followed up our emergency intervention with livelihoods and economic development programs.

Philippines Typhoon Haiyan, 2013

After the devastating 2013 typhoon, Mercy Corps sent experts in water, sanitation, logistics, economic recovery and distribution to provide emergency relief followed by cash distributions to help people rebuild their homes and their lives.

Haiti Earthquake, 2010

Our first team member arrived within 72 hours of the earthquake. During the first few months of the response, Mercy Corps provided 830,000 people with emergency food, clean water, shelter materials, disaster trauma support and temporary jobs. This early effort was the start of what is now one of our largest country programs.



2013 November - Barangay Langub on Kinatarran Island, Philippines. Mercy Corps delivers food relief targeting the most vulnerable. Photo: Miguel Samper for Mercy Corps

During an emergency, visit:

<http://www.mercycorps.org/emergency-response>

CONTACT

Program Inquiries

Michael Bowers

Vice President - Humanitarian Leadership and Response

mbowers@mercycorps.org

Media Inquiries

Christy Delafield

Senior Communications Officer

cdelafield@mercycorps.org

Mercy Corps U.S. Headquarters

45 S.W. Ankeny Street

Portland, OR 97204

503.896.5000

800.292.3355

mercycorps.org

