

Relief and Recovery Programs in Haiti An Experimentation with Solar Cookers

Purpose

Learning through Tzu Chi's disaster relief experience in Haiti and critically evaluating the incorporation of solar cooking in relief and recovery to maximize efficacy.

Results

Tzu Chi Model in Hurricane Matthew

Tzu Chi's model in Hurricane Matthew, similar, yet different to other aid actor's, included: local team/volunteer activation, needs assessment, program development and approval, mobilization, and implementation. During the disaster and needs assessment phase, local Tzu Chi volunteers had to be activated to assess and report on the scale of the disaster, vulnerabilities, and capacities, providing valuable information for relief planning, or program development, process, which is predicated on the timeliness of the local volunteer activation phase. The local volunteers' assessments are utilized during the program development stage, where there is adherence to the guidelines and charters articulated by the humanitarian community; and after the appropriations of fund and approval from the board, mobilization and implementation begins. In the mobilization phase, or more specifically, relief preparations, Tzu Chi coordinated internally with its chapters around the world to overcome logistical challenges, acquiring resources and raising funds. In the implementation stage of relief efforts, or immediate response, and further into the recovery stage, Tzu Chi engages in Food and Non-Food Items distributions and programs in WASH and Health Services. During response, the capacity to adapt and respond to challenges was reinforced by partnerships and collaborations with local and non-local state actors, and other humanitarian actors, from the volunteers in the disaster affected communities to international aid organizations.

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Hurricane Matthew Disaster Relief Result

- **Hot Meal Program: from Oct 21st to Nov 11th**
 - **28,000 hot meals provided**
- **Cash for Relief Program:**
 - **Street cleaning: temporary employment for 60 people for 4 days**
 - **Houses reconstructed: 72 houses**



Conclusions

Key Points in Building Relief to Scale:

- Reflection and innovation
 - Learning from other successful programs, and adjusting it to cater to specific situations or population.
- Coordination and implementation
 - Utilizing local resources and connections and constantly expanding network
 - Encouraging the input of other actors.
- Impact evaluation
 - Evaluating honestly utilizing perspectives from all parties
- Modification and expansion or termination and reinvention
 - Cost benefit analysis, efforts put in versus actual people helped
 - Practicality of the relief projects

Incorporating Solar Cooking into Tzu Chi Charity and Disaster Relief Efforts

To incorporate solar cookers into Tzu Chi's model, close attention needs to be given to the local community, their dietary lifestyle, nutrient demands and deficiencies, and their food culture and methods of cooking, bilaterally partnering with local communities, ensuring not only long-term sustainability, but dignity and respect. The pilot project to test run with solar cookers is the Hot Meal program; and to further promote solar cooking, education and incentive programs can be implemented to present the advantages of solar cooking as well as spreading Tzu Chi's organizational mission of environmental protection. Lastly, the challenges of solar cooking need to be identified; not only do we need to consider the challenges of promoting solar cooking to the locals, but also the challenges for the locals to practically use them. Relief work is a mutual relationship between the benefactors and beneficiaries; the act of giving is only completed when it is truly received, and solar cooking can potentially become a new catalyst to weave disaster relief effort, human dignity, and local culture together.