

Liaison Report

Agency: American Red Cross

Liaison: Jehan Faisal

Need for Program:

The American Red Cross serves all residents of Story County. They respond to disasters by meeting urgent needs such as emergency housing, crisis intervention supports and food assistance. Their volunteers are trained with crisis response skills to help people move from managing immediate physical needs to making interim plans and connecting with social service agencies. They have a strong connection with Iowa State University as demonstrated by the high turnout to their blood drive. ISU collaborates exclusively with the American Red Cross for on-campus blood drives due to ARC's efforts towards inclusion. For example, while FDA rules exclude a potential donor, most notably excluding men who have sex with men, the American Red Cross finds alternate opportunities for volunteering and involvement so that no volunteers are turned away.

Program Strengths:

The American Red Cross is nationally recognized and trusted non-profit agency.

The considerable resources throughout their organization can be activated to assist in disaster and fire response to assist Story County residents. Because of their high national profile, the American Red Cross can focus national and regional attention on local disaster needs.

The American Red Cross can respond to individuals and families in the aftermath of a disaster without qualifiers such as verifying income, family relationship or immigration status. The support they offer disaster victims is responsive to diverse language and cultural needs. The immediacy and efficacy of such support makes an enormous difference in a person or family's ability to recovery from a traumatic event.

The American Red Cross has maintained a strong presence in Story County with volunteers, high engagement with Iowa State Students and, of course, providing critical disaster recovery services.

Program Weakness:

The work of the American Red Cross does not easily fit within the structure of ASSET.

Funding needs are difficult to estimate as natural disaster costs range widely depending on where and what type of damage results.

Financial Outlook:

The agency has strong financial statements.

Internal management Practices:

The Central Iowa Chapter of the American Red Cross serves 30 counties including Story County. They no longer have an office in Story County but their visibility remains high. The organization has a large presence through high engagement actions like the blood drive with Iowa State University.

General Assessment:

The American Red Cross provides vital disaster response services in the face of emergencies. The exact nature or frequency of such needs are hard to predict. Story County residents benefit from the American Red Cross and their robust yet nimble services which are available whenever needs arise. ASSET funding is crucial to those services.