

# Natural Disaster: The Impact of Already Marginalized Communities

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# Disaster Legal Services

- The ABA's touchstone public service
- YLD serves as exclusive coordinator of legal services for disaster survivors
- Coordination between numerous legal and non-legal agencies



# Disaster Legal Services

- Provides FREE legal assistance “low income” persons affected by a presidentially declared major disaster
- Volunteers assist with a wide range of legal issues
- Needs are both immediate and long-term



# Why Do Survivors Need an Attorney?

- Disaster survivors need food, water, shelter—and an attorney
- Many legal issues arise, or are worsened by disasters, such as landlord tenant, consumer fraud, insurance, public benefits, estates and property, tax
- Marginalized communities are especially vulnerable after a disaster



# Types of Marginalized Communities

- Low-Income Individuals
- Non-citizens (incl. refugees, migrants)
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Limited English Proficiency
- Limited Mobility & Disabled
- Homeless & Mentally Ill
- Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation
- And the list goes on...



# Barriers to Seeking Assistance

## Lack of Knowledge

- Is Assistance available?
- Where do I look?
- Is there a legal issue or solution?
- How does the system or process work?

## Practical Factors

- Lack of resources
- Restrictive funding
- Transportation
- Lack of Time
- Distrust
- Costs



## Seguimiento de casos (Following Cases) Facebook

Reported:

- \* 37 cases of women disappeared
- \* 33 women murdered
- \* 9 cases reported as Domestic Violence involving a 9 year old girl
- \* 8 cases were resolved

## 911 reported (from September 20<sup>th</sup> until November 21<sup>st</sup>)

- \* A total of 1,747
- \* September: 211 reported
- \* October: 889
- \* November: 647

## Three towns with the highest rates reported by 911:

- \* San Juan 400 cases
- \* Carolina 186
- \* Bayamón 156



## Hurricanes Irma and María

- During the month of September Puerto Rico suffered the onslaught of two hurricanes (Irma and María) that left the island in a situation of great need.
- The island was deprived of essential services such as electricity, water and communications. Food, drinking water, fuel, health services, among others, were scarce.
- The government took more than ten days to be able to respond to the needs of the population.
- A figure of 1,065 deaths is estimated due to Hurricane Maria and even more than 50% of the population does not have electricity service and communications continue to be a challenge despite the fact that 85 days have passed since the last atmospheric phenomenon hit the island.

Coordinadora Paz para la Mujer, Inc. (CPM)  
Coalición Puertorriqueña Contra la Violencia Doméstica y la Agresión Sexual



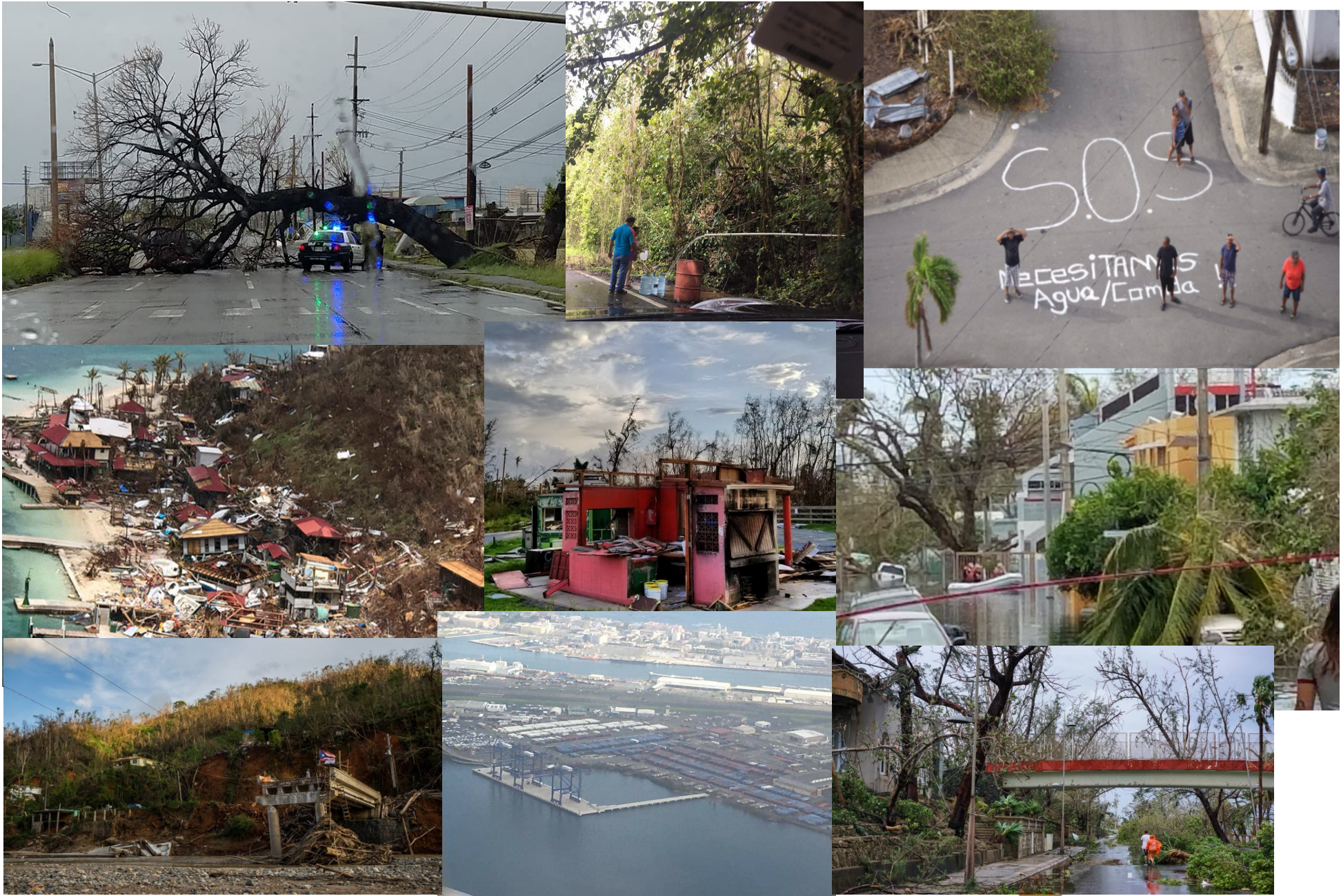


Coordinadora Paz para la Mujer redesigned its work plan in order to offer technical support to the organizations that make up the Coalition.

Projects were created:

- Collection Center - in partnership with the Puerto Rico Bar Association, the Collection Center was created to receive supplies such as water, canned food, milk, toiletries, etc.
- Health route – Created services to meet the particular needs of the sheltered women. The Health Route offered services in 4 shelters. In partnership with the School of Nursing of the Medical Sciences Campus and the Carlos Albizu University, physical and emotional health services were offered.
- CuidarNos- To address the primary trauma experienced by the employees of the organizations, the workshop was created to provide techniques for Self-care. Was offered in shelters and outpatient services programs. Primary trauma and vicarious trauma were worked with in order to provide participants with tools to avoid compassion fatigue.
- Violet Caravan- After Hurricane María, Peace Coordinator for Women (CPM) created “Caravana Violeta” as an initiative with the purpose of joining the international efforts for the Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women that takes place every November 25th. At this point we have visited six municipalities; and served approximately 700 people.
  - At each event we brought volunteers with medical, psychological, holistic work, sexual health and legal services, including activities for children to teach them about prevention of violence and sexual assault.





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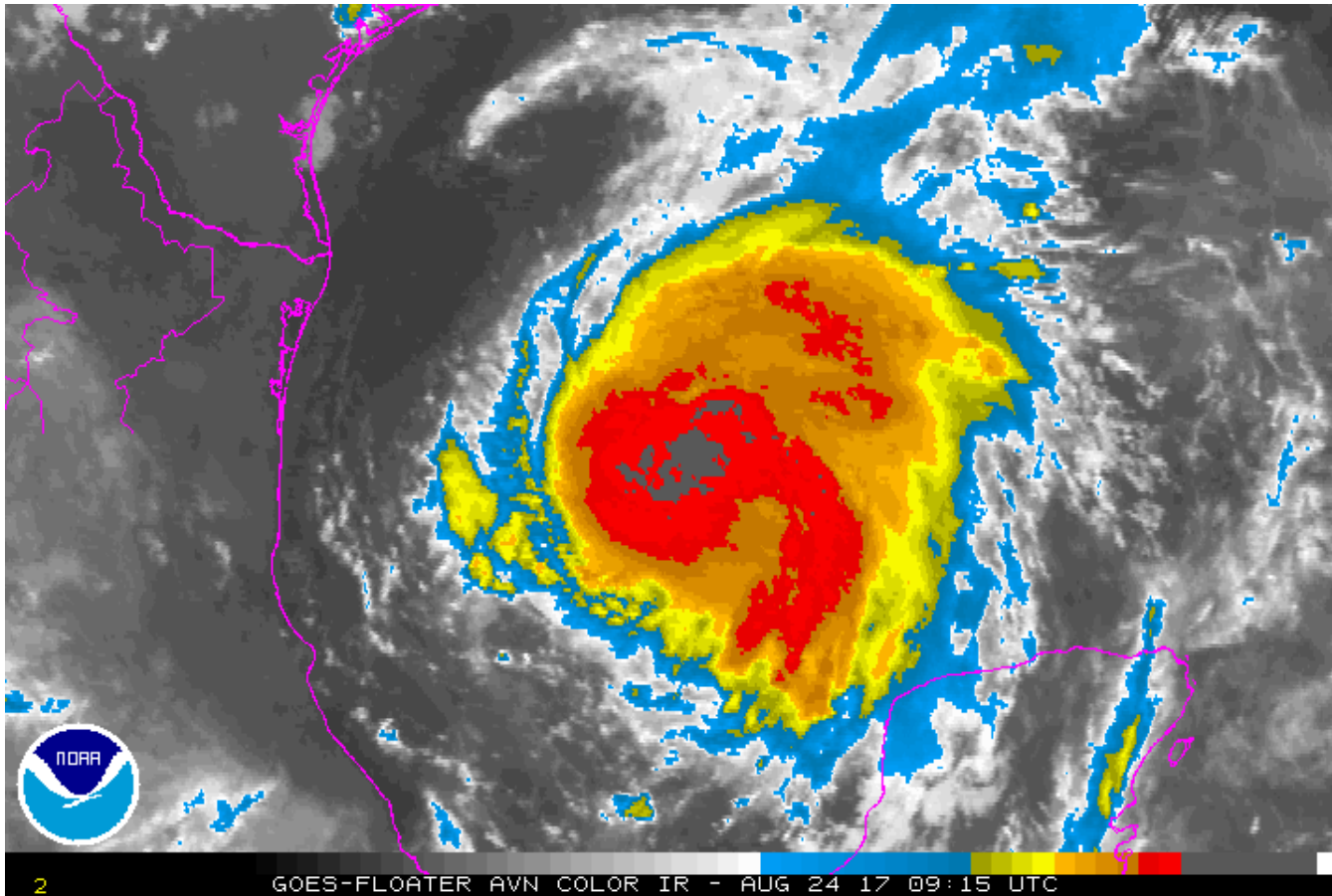


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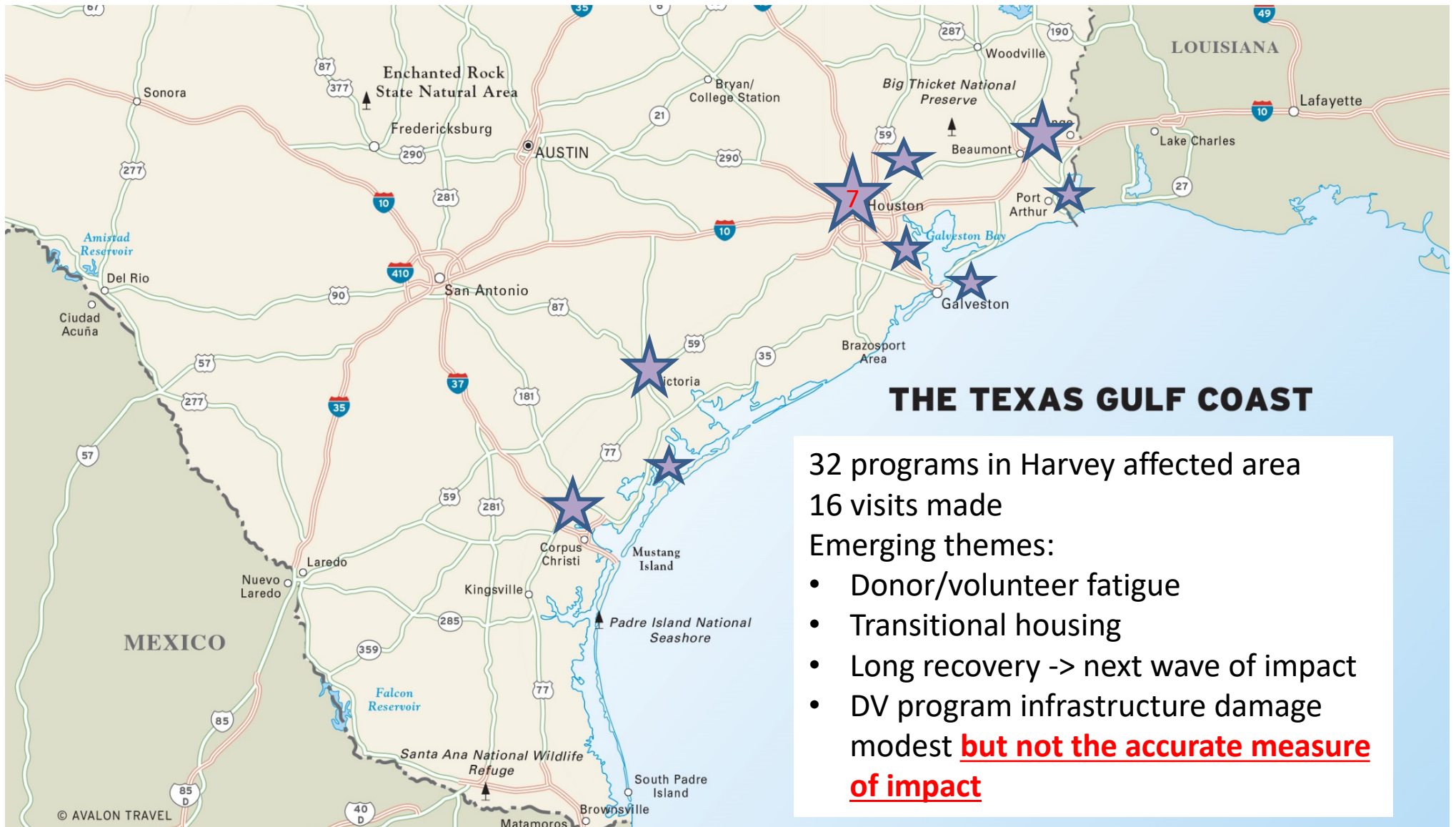


**Gloria Aguilera Terry, CEO  
Texas Council on Family Violence**





## *Hurricane e Harvey Updates*



# SUPPORT



Mary Kay - \$250,000

Verizon - \$50,000

Office of the Governor - \$96,780

\*\*\*\*Rebuild Texas - \$92M\*\*\*\*

# Intersection of Domestic Violence & Disaster

The word disaster implies an incident that is intense, powerful, damaging, adverse and extreme.

Domestic violence is an ongoing disaster experienced at a personal level.

*“One client’s ex-husband came by and took all the blankets so he would be warm--leaving her and her children in the cold.”*

*-Advocate from NJ*



# Lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy

- **Generator**
  - On site or at evacuation site
  - Extra gas for generator
  - Generator strong enough to run fridge, heaters etc...
- **Food**
  - Extra resources
  - Reduce spoilage

# Clearinghouse on domestic violence & disaster

CLEARINGHOUSE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DISASTER - Google Chrome  
www.domesticviolenceanddisaster.org

**DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE:** Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor. The Disaster Distress Helpline is a confidential, multilingual hotline dedicated to providing year-round immediate crisis counseling for people experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

## CLEARINGHOUSE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND DISASTER

HOME / RESOURCES / ANIMAL SHELTER DATABASE / CONTACT US

**PREPAREDNESS. RESPONSE. RECOVERY. MITIGATION.**

Domestic violence is an ongoing disaster happening on an intimate level.

Survivors of domestic violence are often already isolated, financially dependent, with limited social networks.

When disaster strikes, local support services become overwhelmed, their environments become even more dangerous and isolation increases.

Resources For  
**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS**

Resources For  
**EMERGENCY RESPONDERS**

For Survivors & DV Programs  
**NEW YORK DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ANIMAL SHELTER DATABASE**