



Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023: Spotlight on Employees

As natural disasters grow in frequency and intensity, stakeholders increasingly expect companies to respond through their corporate citizenship and philanthropy programs. This report presents key findings and insights for companies to enhance their disaster response capabilities, drawing from a survey by The Conference Board of the disaster philanthropy practices at 100 major companies. This year's edition includes a focus on employees as drivers, contributors, and beneficiaries of corporate responses.

Trusted Insights for What's Ahead™

Since 2020, 53 percent of companies have increased the number of disasters they respond to, and 61 percent have increased their total disaster philanthropy giving levels—and they expect this trend to continue. The growing threat of disasters is closely linked to climate change concerns: 89 percent of executives expect climate change to significantly affect their programs and spending for disaster response over the next five years.

- **Firms can better prepare to respond to disasters by mapping their equipment, facilities, networks, technical expertise, and intellectual property against potential disaster needs in target communities.** While the most common form of disaster philanthropy is direct cash donations, companies can increase their impact by harnessing their core competencies and distinctive capabilities for relief and recovery.



- **Immediate relief is the primary focus of corporate disaster philanthropy, although companies have significant value to add in other phases such as pre-disaster preparedness or post-disaster reconstruction.** Preparedness is particularly important for building resilience in vulnerable communities and reducing the need for relief, and companies have an important and unique role to play. According to our survey, 42 percent of firms engage in pre-disaster preparedness.
- **There is significant potential for corporations to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of their disaster response efforts through collaboration with peer companies.** According to our survey, only 28 percent of firms have partnered with other for-profit entities when responding to disasters. There is also a significant opportunity for increased public-private sector collaboration during disaster response, to pool resources and plug gaps.
- **Companies should establish clear criteria to determine when and how to respond to specific disasters and incorporate these criteria into internal protocols to promote more rational decision-making.** Our survey indicates that the three most important determinants for responding to a disaster are 1) the proximity to company operations; 2) the human toll; and 3) employee pressure and expectations. Companies may also consider socioeconomic conditions and the actions of peer companies.
- **As employees are the leading stakeholder group (cited by 93 percent of companies) in driving and shaping disaster philanthropy efforts, companies may benefit from finding ways to tap into the collective power and enthusiasm of their workforce.** By actively involving employees in the decision-making process, encouraging volunteerism, supporting employee-driven fundraising campaigns, and providing opportunities for skills-based volunteering or pro bono work, companies can harness their workforce to make a tangible and lasting impact on disaster-affected communities.
- **Ensuring the safety of employees is the top priority for many companies during disasters, and 69 percent provide direct financial assistance through a dedicated employee relief fund.** Of these companies, most choose to either 1) house the relief fund internally, with direct control of the fund's operations and processes, or 2) partner with a third-party organization specializing in employee relief programs. The financial and social impact of emergency relief on employees can be profound, which in turn generates [tangible business outcomes](#) for the company and its stakeholders.

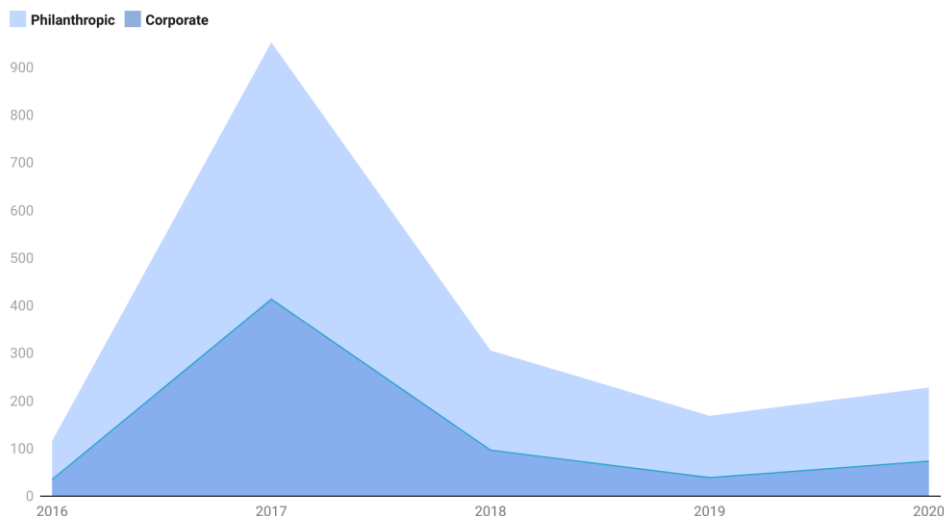
Corporate Disaster Philanthropy Practices

Private philanthropy

The number, intensity, and cost of natural disasters are rising globally.¹ The private sector is an important player in global disaster response, with a long history of supporting affected communities.² Between 2016 and 2020, an estimated \$1.77 billion in philanthropic funding was directed globally toward responding to natural disasters, with 37 percent of this amount originating from companies or company-affiliated foundations.³ During the same period, substantial philanthropic resources were also directed toward addressing man-made disasters, complex emergencies, and (from 2020 onwards) the COVID-19 pandemic.

For natural disasters, corporate philanthropy represented 37 percent of total global philanthropy in 2016 – 2020

Total global philanthropic spending vs total corporate philanthropic spending on natural disasters, 2016 – 2020, US\$ million

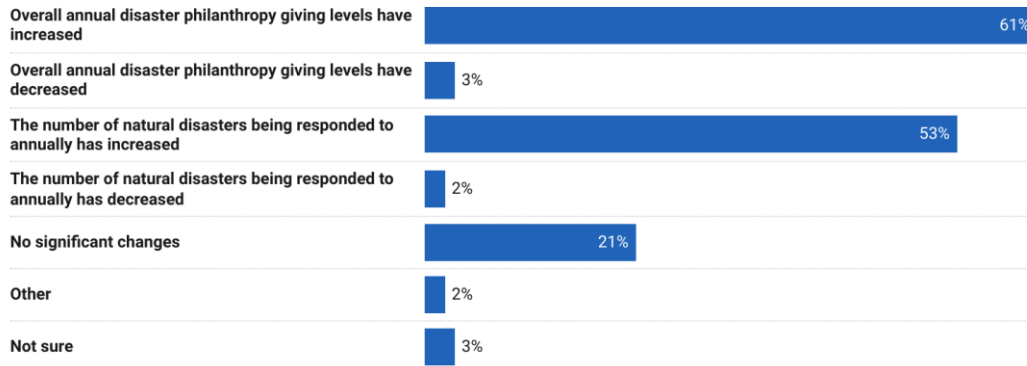


Data sourced from Candid / Center for Disaster Philanthropy
 "Natural disasters" includes drought, earthquake/tsunami, flood, mass movement, storm, extreme temperature, volcano, wildfire
 Source: Candid / Center for Disaster Philanthropy, Measuring the State of Disaster Philanthropy, 2023
<https://disasterphilanthropy.candid.org/map/> • Created with Datawrapper

While comprehensive aggregated global statistics for disaster philanthropy beyond 2020 are not yet available, our survey of 100 leading corporations indicates that most companies have experienced a rise in both the number of disasters they have addressed and their overall levels of disaster giving since 2020. Growing corporate engagement with natural disasters can be attributed to several trends, including the increasing frequency and severity of disasters, long-term trends in global humanitarianism toward an enlarged role for the private sector, and [increasing stakeholder expectations](#) for companies to address social and environmental challenges.

Most companies have increased their disaster philanthropy budgets and response levels since 2020

Q: Since January 2020, has your approach and giving levels for natural disasters changed compared to previous years? (choose all that apply):

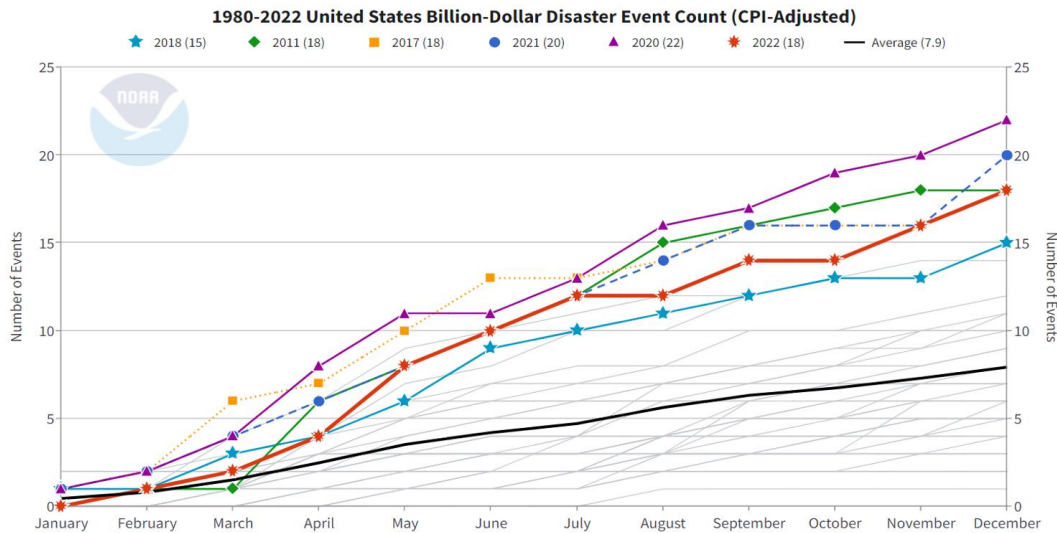


Note: 95 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Current context for disaster philanthropy

In 2022 alone, the US experienced 18 separate weather and climate disasters, each causing at least \$1 billion in damages. The cumulative cost of these disasters amounted to \$165 billion, and at least 474 fatalities. 2022 marked the eighth consecutive year in which 10 or more billion-dollar disaster events affected the US.



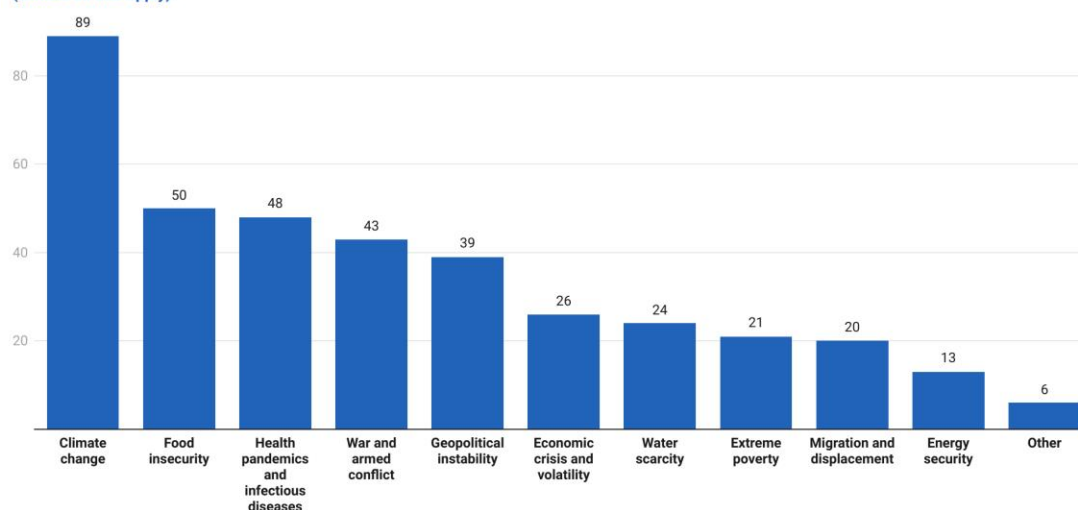
Note: Month-by-month accumulation of billion-dollar disasters for each year on record. The colored lines represent the top 6 years for most billion-dollar disasters (2011, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, 2022).

Source: NOAA Climate.gov, 2023

The increasing intensity of natural disasters is closely tied to the growing threat of global climate change, evident in rising temperatures, shifting precipitation patterns, and escalating sea levels. These factors contribute to the more frequent and severe occurrence of heatwaves, wildfires, storms, droughts, hurricanes, cyclones, and floods, all of which disproportionately affect vulnerable communities.⁴ Our survey reveals that many corporations recognize the impact that climate change will have on their disaster response efforts in the coming years, with interconnected challenges such as food insecurity, health pandemics, and extreme poverty.

89 percent of companies expect climate change to significantly affect their disaster response efforts over the next five years

Q: Over the next 5 years, which global challenges do you expect will significantly affect your programs and spending for responding to disasters? (choose all that apply):



Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Stages of disaster response

Previous disaster philanthropy surveys by The Conference Board (published in 2019, 2020, and 2021) highlighted a predominant corporate focus on immediate relief and assistance over other stages of disaster response such as preparedness, short-term recovery, and long-term reconstruction. This trend persists, as virtually all companies (96 percent) commit resources to immediate relief. However, 72 percent of firms also extend their support to short-term recovery, while almost half contribute toward long-term reconstruction and rebuilding efforts. By supporting disaster response efforts in the long haul, companies can help rebuild affected communities in a way that restores economic stability and boosts resilience to future disasters.

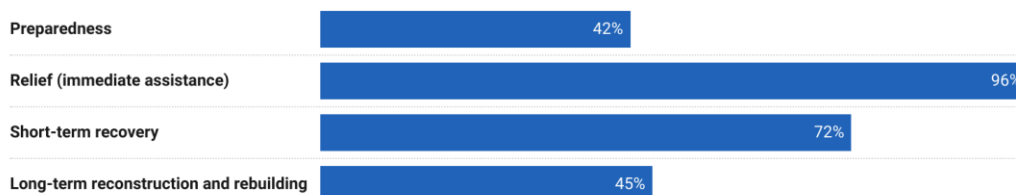
Furthermore, an encouraging 42 percent of firms engage in pre-disaster preparedness activities. Companies possess valuable resources and expertise that can minimize the impact of disasters on communities and businesses, including resilient infrastructure and community partnerships. For example, Walmart invests in disaster planning and preparedness (including risk assessments, business continuity, and crisis management planning) and supports vulnerable and underserved communities to build preparedness and resilience ahead of disaster events.

To increase effectiveness in pre-disaster preparedness, companies can consider:

- Dedicating a significant portion of their annual disaster response budget to preparedness in the areas and communities in which they operate.
- Funding NGOs involved in disaster preparedness and building their capacity—including their data and broader IT needs.
- Implementing place-based approaches to identify the most vulnerable communities, and target preparedness investments.
- Developing key partnerships and protocols for responding in specific communities before disasters strike, to quickly activate and deploy resources when needed.
- Requesting that nonprofit partners conduct a resiliency assessment.

Immediate relief is the primary focus of corporate disaster response

Q: Which stages of disaster philanthropy does your company engage in? (choose all that apply):



Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Forms of disaster philanthropy

Direct cash donations to on-the-ground partners is the most prevalent form of corporate disaster philanthropy (94 percent). Cash contributions provide flexibility in responding to the specific needs and priorities of disaster-affected areas and can be quickly distributed and used by local organizations and communities; 65 percent also contribute in-kind goods and services, such as essential supplies, equipment, or professional services.

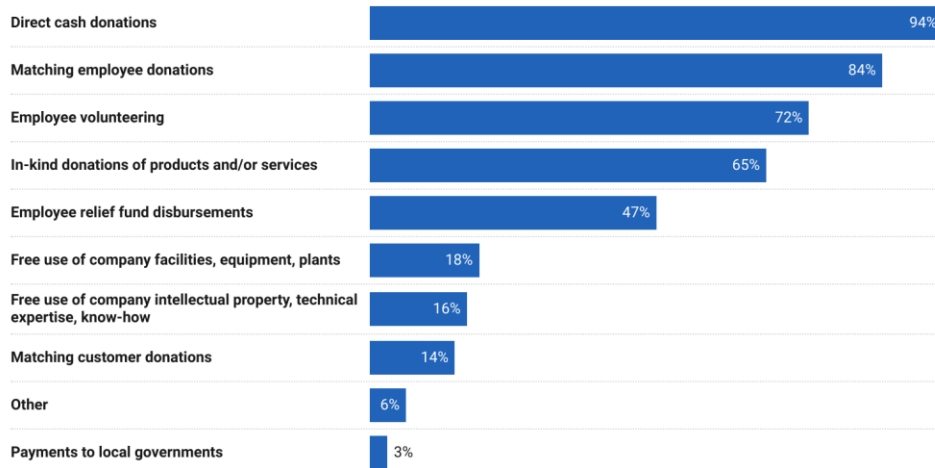
Corporations also leverage the philanthropy of their own workforce: 84 percent of companies match employee contributions with corporate funds, while 72 percent provide opportunities for volunteerism.

Less commonly, firms offer their equipment, facilities, plants, networks, technical expertise, and intellectual property to support relief and recovery operations. This is a major area of opportunity. For example, [IBM](#) supports governments and humanitarian actors with a wide range of [open-source technologies and artificial intelligence systems for disaster response](#). These technologies have been used to track and distribute supplies, monitor the spread of

infectious diseases, model traffic to help evacuate from fire zones, predict refugee flows, measure earthquakes, and more.

Direct cash donations is the leading form of corporate disaster philanthropy –although companies have multiple ways to respond

Q: Since January 2020, how has your company implemented its disaster philanthropy? (choose all that apply):



Note: 100 respondents

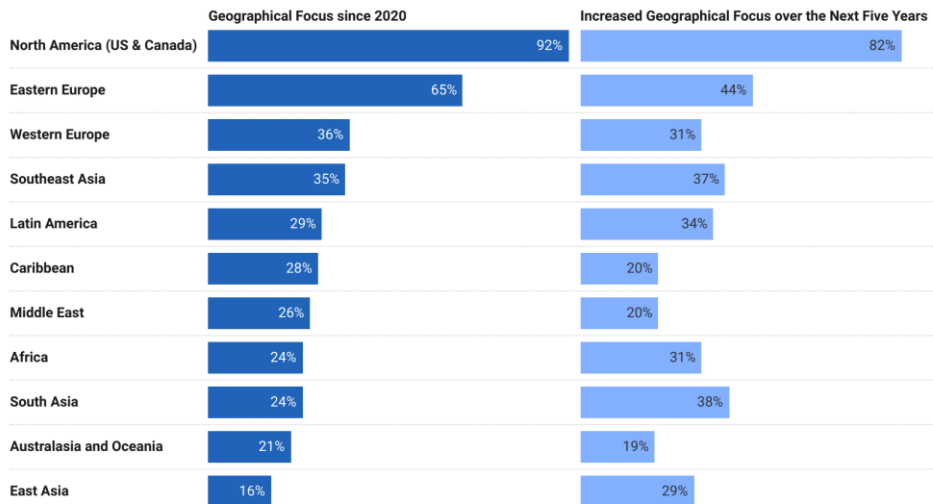
Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Geographical focus

Over the past three years, survey respondents have focused their disaster philanthropy on North America, particularly the US. Corporations have also actively responded to disasters around the world, and many expect to increase their focus in climate-vulnerable regions such as South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

North America has been the primary geographical focus of disaster philanthropy since 2020, and will be an increased focus over the next five years

Q: Since January 2020, which geographical regions have been a focus of your disaster philanthropy? (choose all that apply):



Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

By extending their reach in these regions, companies should consider how they can go beyond cash donations to leverage their resources, expertise, and influence to make a positive and lasting impact, while also fostering stronger stakeholder relationships in those regions.

Eastern Europe has been a major focus of corporate disaster philanthropy since 2020, and 89 percent of companies responded to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. As documented in a series of briefs by The Conference Board, the factors involved in how companies respond philanthropically to armed conflicts such as the war in Ukraine are both [different from natural disasters](#) (increased complexity and danger, greater reliance on international organizations, increased importance of cash donations) and [similar](#) (redirection of resources to respond, pressure from employees to help, a need for lasting partnerships).

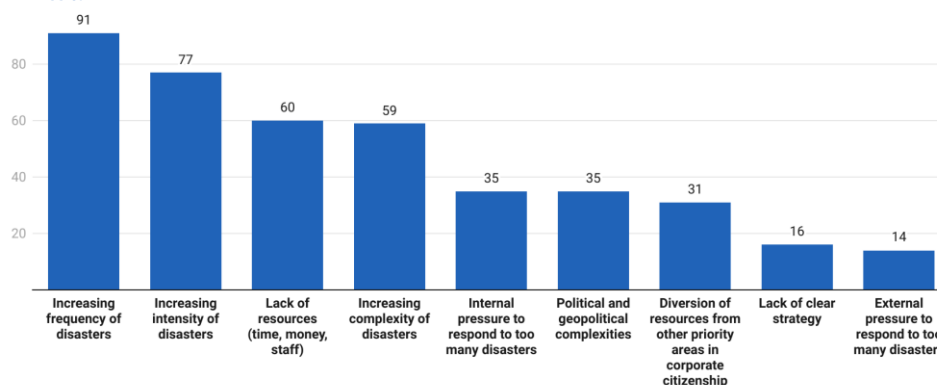
Future challenges

Looking ahead, virtually all companies (91 percent) expect natural disasters to become more frequent, 77 percent anticipate disasters to become more intense, and 59 percent think they will become more complex. These findings provide a troubling snapshot of a future characterized by increasing disaster needs and a complex [global environment of uncertainty](#). To strengthen their company's capacity for disaster response, CEOs can invest in:

- Assessing the risks of disasters to the company, its operating communities, and other locations of strategic importance.
- Engaging with corporate departments, business units, nonprofit organizations, and government entities to map their collective resources for disaster response and identify gaps.
- Developing disaster response plans that include governance for decision-making during times of crisis.
- Considering what investments can be made now to reduce the risk and impact of disasters, while facilitating faster recovery and rebuilding.

91 percent of companies expect the frequency of disasters to increase over the next five years

Q: Over the next 5 years, which obstacles do you expect your company to face in responding effectively to natural disasters (choose all that apply):



Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Stakeholders and Partnerships

Key drivers

Of all stakeholders, employees are the most significant drivers of corporate disaster response efforts. This trend will continue, as 84 percent of our survey respondents expect employees to have an even stronger influence over the next five years. The sustained pressure from employees reflects wider trends, including:

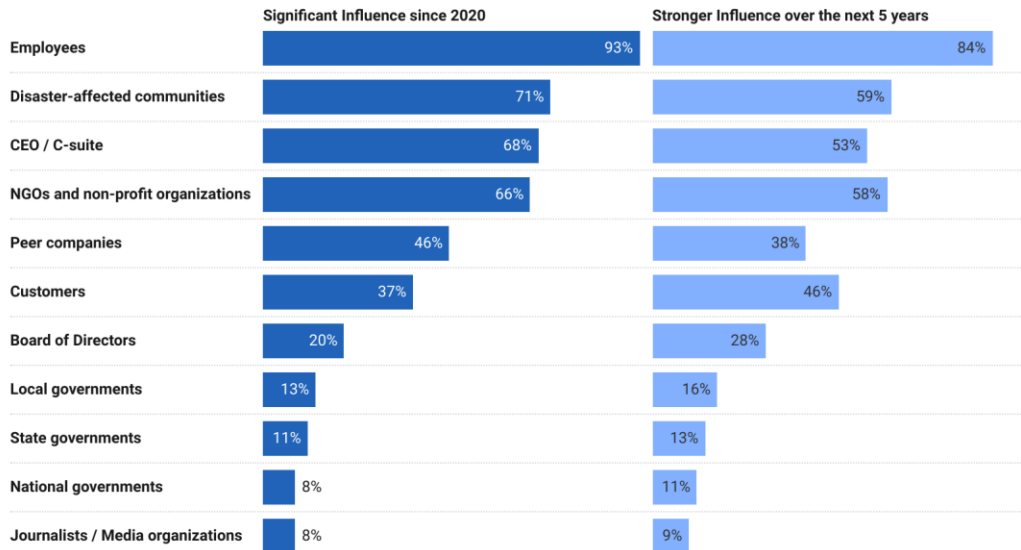
- **Increasing exposure of employees to disaster risks and impacts**, due to a broader increase in natural disasters globally. Many companies consider protecting employees to be their first priority when responding to disasters.
- **Increasing employee activism**, expressed in vocal expectations for companies to address environmental and social issues and more employee giving and volunteering.
- **Corporate strategies to strengthen employee engagement and morale** (and, by extension, [boost productivity and attract talent](#)) through demonstrating social responsibility and addressing societal challenges.
- **Changing labor market dynamics**, in particular the growing presence in the workplace of [millennial](#) and [Generation Z](#) employees, who may be more socially conscious and environmentally aware than previous generations.

By actively involving employees in the decision-making process, encouraging volunteerism, supporting employee-driven fundraising campaigns, and providing opportunities for skills-based volunteering or pro bono work, companies can tap into the collective power of their workforce to make a tangible and lasting impact on disaster-affected communities.

Other stakeholder groups that influence corporate disaster philanthropy include disaster-affected communities, CEOs and C-Suite executives, and nongovernmental organizations. In contrast, governments at various levels—local, state, and national—do not exert significant influence on how companies engage in disaster response. This gap suggests a much stronger need for companies to engage with government in determining the appropriate roles of the public and private sector in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. Indeed, in a [polarized political environment](#) characterized by [growing ESG backlash](#), building relationships with policymakers relating to disaster response can be beneficial to companies and communities alike.

Employees are the leading stakeholder group driving corporate disaster philanthropy, and will grow further in influence

Q: Which stakeholder groups have influenced or shaped your company's involvement in disaster philanthropy?



Note: 100 respondents

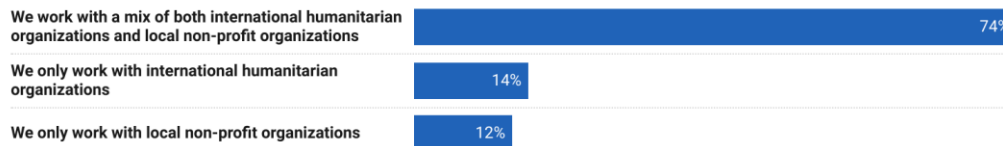
Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Partnerships

Companies rely on a range of partners to effectively implement their disaster philanthropy efforts around the world, with most working through a balanced combination of international humanitarian organizations and local nonprofit entities.

74 percent of companies collaborate with both international and local humanitarian organizations to respond to natural disasters

Q: How does your company work with international humanitarian organizations to execute its disaster philanthropy plans? (choose one):



Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Of the 88 percent of companies that collaborate with international humanitarian actors, most cite their most frequent partner as the Red Cross / Red Crescent movement—either through the [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#), or specific national Red Cross / Crescent Societies. More than half of respondents collaborate with specialized United Nations agencies such as [UNICEF](#) or the [World Food Programme](#). Many also choose to partner

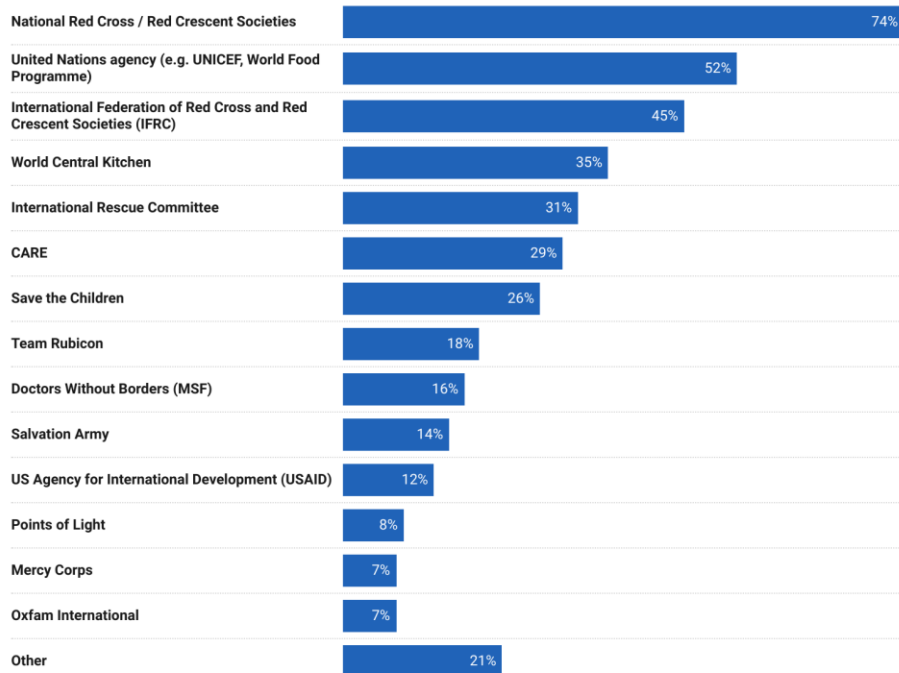
with leading international NGOs such as [The International Rescue Committee](#), [CARE International](#), and [Save the Children](#).

Through these partnerships, companies can tap into globally recognized expertise, access critical resources, and coordinate response efforts that align with international humanitarian standards. Companies may consider investing in further capacity building for these organizations; for example, Walmart [provides funding to the Red Cross](#) to improve its overall data capabilities, which in turn enables the organization to better identify vulnerable communities.

In contrast, only a small proportion of companies (12 percent) partner with the US government—specifically, the [US Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#), which administers official US humanitarian assistance. Exploring further collaborations with USAID and other US government agencies is a promising avenue for future public-private cooperation in addressing international humanitarian challenges—particularly as corporate philanthropic funding often plugs gaps before federal dollars are mobilized.

National Red Cross / Red Crescent Societies are the most frequent international humanitarian partners

Q: Which of the following international humanitarian organizations does your company partner with? (choose all that apply):



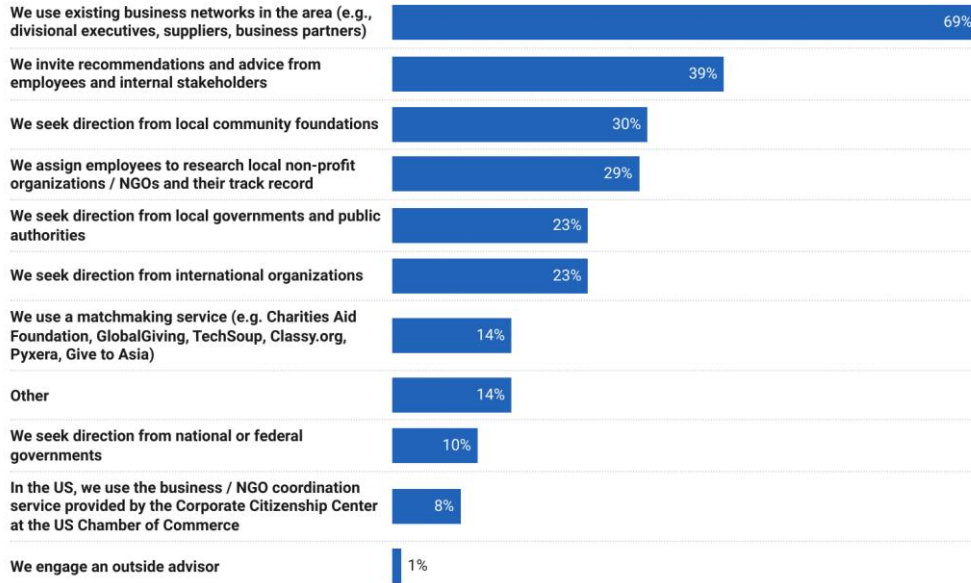
Note: 85 respondents
 Notable "Other" responses: World Vision, Center for Disaster Philanthropy, Refugees International, All Hands
 Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

When seeking local nonprofit partners to collaborate with, most companies (69 percent) tap into their existing business networks in the area. Local partners are an important and essential complement to larger national or international organizations, and can enable more effective engagement with underserved, lower-income, or rural communities. Indeed, corporations

(especially those with a strong local presence) can play a vital role in knitting together local and national / international actors for a more coherent and thoughtful response.

Most companies use existing business networks to identify local humanitarian partners

Q: How does your company identify local non-profit organizations to collaborate with? (choose all that apply):



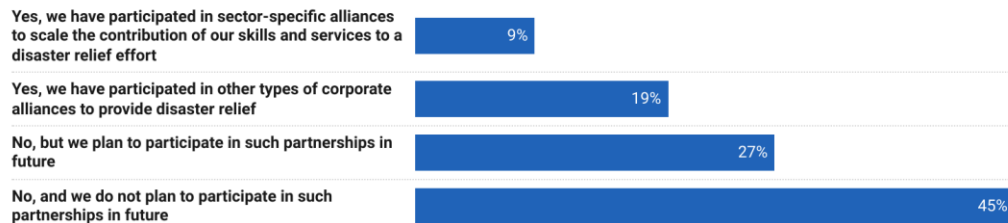
Note: 83 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Companies can also maximize their resources and impact by collaborating with peer companies. It is concerning that only 28 percent of respondent companies have joined forces with other corporations for disaster response—either through sector-specific alliances (9 percent) or other types of partnerships (19 percent).

Only 28 percent of firms partner with peer companies to implement disaster philanthropy

Q: Since January 2020, has your company joined forces with other for-profit corporations for disaster relief efforts? (choose one):



Note: 97 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

The increasing frequency, complexity, and impact of disasters makes it important to think beyond any single-company response. And there are trends that should make it easier to collaborate across companies, including the virtual work environment and the ability to address all four stages of disaster relief on an ongoing basis. Companies should explore how they can bring their complementary skills, expertise, and industry perspectives to bear in collaborating with other corporations.

Governance of Disaster Philanthropy

Internal responsibilities

Internal governance is important for ensuring that a company's disaster philanthropy is effective, efficient, and aligned with overall strategic goals and values. This governance includes deciding where to place responsibility for disaster philanthropy for greatest impact.

Our survey shows that corporate citizenship is the leading corporate function for overseeing, administering, and delivering disaster philanthropy efforts (78 percent). Corporate citizenship has a long history of engaging with communities, collaborating with external organizations and nonprofit partners, and serving as the corporate equivalent of a "first responder" during crises and emergencies.

Other corporate functions that contribute significantly toward disaster philanthropy include employee engagement (33 percent), ESG / sustainability (31 percent), and human resources (29 percent). These units are essential partners for aligning with broader sustainability goals, ensuring the safety of the workforce, developing emergency response plans, and providing training on disaster preparedness.

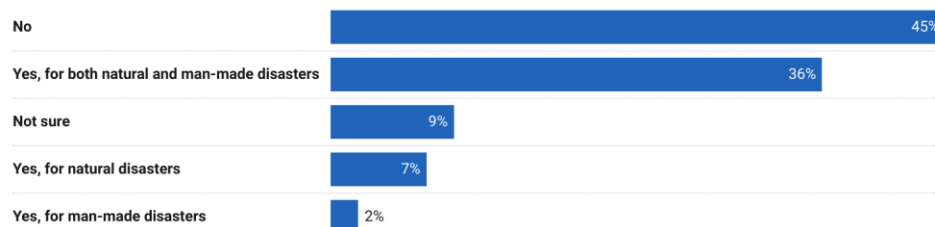
To further improve collaboration between internal functions for disaster philanthropy, CEOs and company leaders can consider:

- **Developing a cross-functional disaster response team** composed of representatives from across business units (especially corporate citizenship, HR, ESG, and sustainability).
- **Aligning objectives and priorities among different functions** to encourage collaboration on disaster preparedness, common understanding of potential risks, and clear definitions of roles and responsibilities for when a disaster strikes.
- **Sharing information and resources across functions** through regular meetings, collaboration platforms, or shared databases.

- **Conducting strategic planning and simulation exercises** through “what if” scenarios to test the company’s disaster response plans and evaluate the effectiveness of internal collaboration. Our survey shows only 43 percent of companies currently engage in strategic planning and scenario analysis relating to natural disasters, and only 38 percent are doing so for man-made disasters.

43 percent of companies undertake strategic planning for potential future natural disasters

Q: Does your company currently consider “what if” scenarios and undertake strategic planning for potential future natural and man-made disasters? (choose one):



Note: 96 respondents

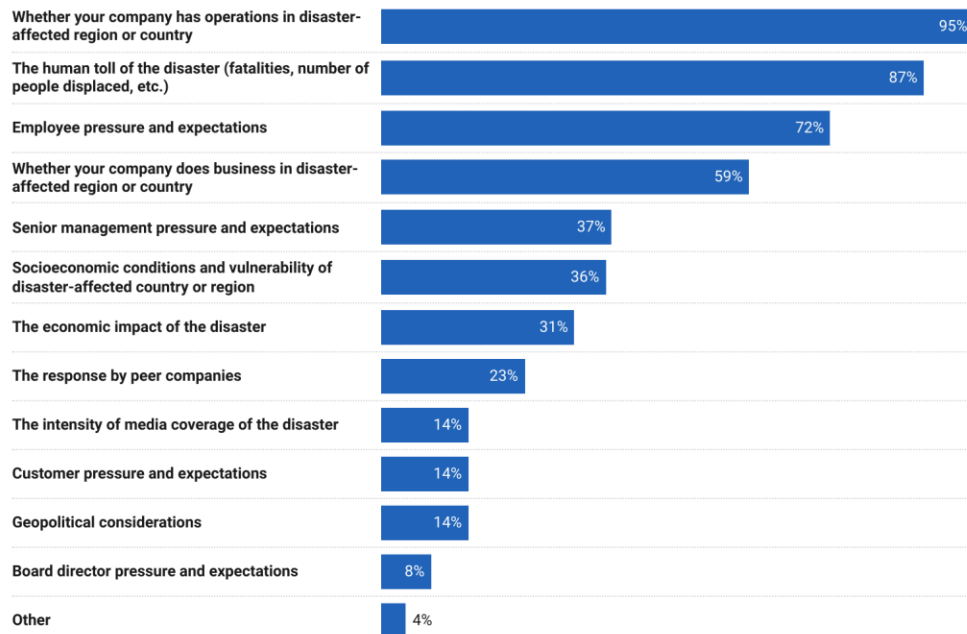
Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Internal policies and processes

Our survey shows the three leading determinants of when a company responds to a disaster are the proximity of the disaster to company operations (95 percent), the human toll of the disaster (87 percent), and pressure and expectations from employees (72 percent). These criteria should be incorporated into formal protocols for determining how to respond to specific disasters, to reduce the emotion of the decision-making process and dampen the instinct to react to every crisis. Notably, only 14 percent of companies consider customer pressure and expectations when determining whether to respond to a natural disaster. This may be an area where companies can do more: asked to list the top five issues companies should focus on to improve society, [31 percent of US consumers](#) said they expect businesses to respond to natural disasters.

Proximity to company operations, the human toll, and employee expectations are the key determinants for whether a company responds to a natural disaster

Q: What are the top 5 factors that determine whether your company responds to a natural disaster? (choose five):



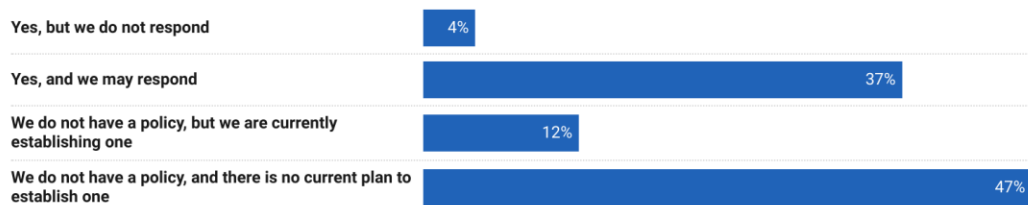
Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Companies may also benefit from creating and implementing a policy framework to determine whether to respond to man-made disasters such as armed conflicts, industrial accidents, acts of terrorism, and mass shootings. Man-made disasters can pose additional social, political, and economic challenges. Our survey shows that only 41 percent of companies currently have such a policy in place, although a further 12 percent are developing a framework.

59 percent of companies do not have a policy for responding to man-made disasters

Q: Does your company have a policy on responding to man-made disasters (e.g., mass-shootings, and terrorist acts)? (choose one):



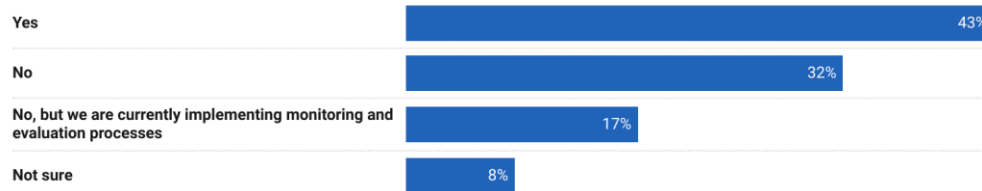
Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Currently, only 43 percent of survey respondents routinely monitor and evaluate the impact of disaster philanthropy—although a further 17 percent are developing such processes. Companies may consider investing in defining key performance indicators (KPIs) and building the necessary capacity for monitoring and evaluating their disaster philanthropy efforts. By embedding a culture of learning and adaptation within their disaster philanthropy initiatives, companies can continuously improve and enhance their efforts.

Only 43 percent of companies routinely monitor and evaluate their disaster philanthropy efforts

Q: Does your company routinely monitor and evaluate the impact of your disaster philanthropy efforts? (choose one):



Note: 100 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Employee Relief and Assistance

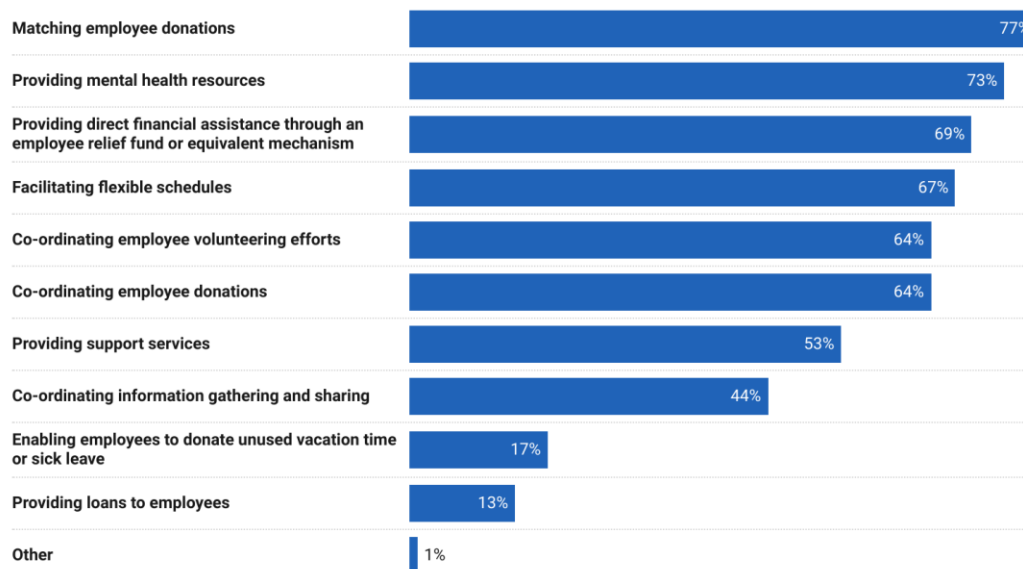
Supporting the workforce

Employees are the most significant stakeholder group in shaping and influencing how companies engage in disaster philanthropy. Employees are also important beneficiaries of corporate disaster philanthropy, especially when disasters strike communities where the company operates or is a leading employer.

Companies primarily support their workforce during disasters through facilitating and matching the donations of other employees (77 percent), providing mental health resources (73 percent), facilitating flexible schedules (67 percent), coordinating employee volunteering and donations (64 percent), and providing support services (53 percent).

Companies have multiple ways to support employees during times of disaster

Q: Since January 2020, what steps has your company taken to support your workforce during times of disaster? (choose all that apply):



Note: 96 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Employee relief funds

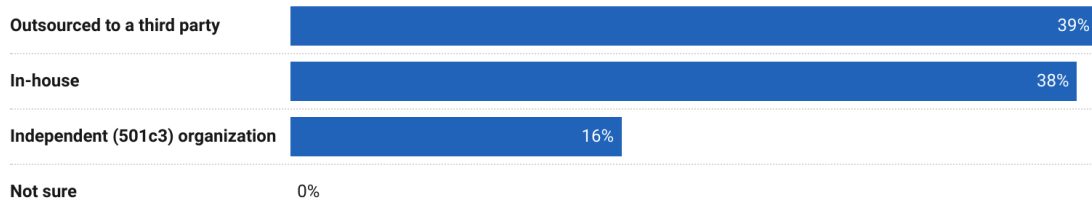
Most companies (69 percent) demonstrate their commitment to employee welfare by offering direct financial assistance through an employee relief fund or a similar mechanism. These funds provide targeted financial aid to employees who have been affected directly by disasters, helping them meet urgent expenses and stabilize their financial situation. Relief funds are typically funded by contributions from both the company and its employees, and operated with structured processes around eligibility, applications, and grantmaking.

According to our survey results, 64 percent of companies have already established such a fund, while a further 8 percent are planning to create one. Of these companies, most choose to either 1) house the relief fund internally, with direct control of the fund's operations and processes, or 2) partner with a third-party organization specializing in employee relief programs (such as [E4E Relief](#)). Some companies have chosen to establish their employee relief program as an independent charitable organization, typically structured as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity.

Establishing the fund as an independent entity can provide flexibility in soliciting external donations from stakeholders.

Companies with an employee fund tend to either outsource to a third party, or administer in house

Q: How is your employee relief fund administered? (choose one):



Note: 61 respondents

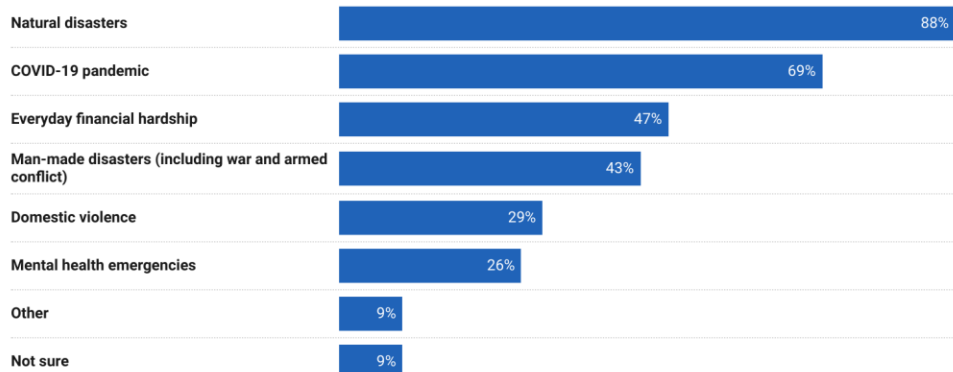
Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Since 2020, employee relief funds have focused on two primary areas: natural disasters (88 percent of companies with relief funds) and the COVID-19 pandemic (69 percent). A further 43 percent have provided aid to employees affected by man-made disasters, including armed conflicts.

A significant minority of companies have broadened the scope of their employee relief funds to support employees in other aspects of their lives, such as everyday financial hardship (47 percent); 29 percent of companies have also provided support to employees experiencing domestic violence, while 26 percent have included support for mental health emergencies. By broadening the range of qualifying events, companies can ensure their employees receive assistance regardless of the complexity of the crisis they face.

Natural disasters are the primary focus of employee relief funds—although a significant minority are expanding into other areas of employee support and wellbeing

Q: What areas of employee assistance and relief has your employee assistance fund focused on since January 2020? (choose all that apply):



Note: 58 respondents

Source: Disaster Philanthropy Practices 2023, The Conference Board ESG Center, 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

The impact of employee relief

Receiving direct financial assistance can transform employees' health and well-being while also generating significant business benefits for the company and its stakeholders. Recently, E4E Relief has worked to quantify this impact through its [ImpactStackSM](#) platform, which includes impact research across several financial and social metrics generated from more than 10,000 surveys of employee relief grant recipients:

- **Employee well-being:** 80 percent of grant recipients were able to restore their financial stability through the assistance provided, and 54 percent reported improved mental health after receiving a grant.
- **Engagement:** 43 percent of grant recipients reported increased engagement at work after receiving a grant. Heightened employee engagement in turn [contributes to shareholder value](#) through enhanced profitability and decreased turnover rates.
- **Productivity:** 70 percent of grant recipients reported that their grant helped them maintain productivity at work. Productivity is a critical factor in the success of any organization, and when disasters and hardships threaten to disrupt it, employee relief programs play a vital role in preserving and bolstering productivity levels.
- **Retention:** 67 percent of grant recipients expressed an increased desire to continue their employment with the company, indicating the influence of such programs on employee loyalty. Moreover, 76 percent of recipients reported a more positive perception of their company due to the support they received during challenging times.

Conclusion

As natural disasters increase, it becomes more challenging for companies to respond to disasters in an efficient, effective, and sustainable manner. Our survey of 100 companies and additional research indicate that an increased focus on planning, governance, innovation and collaboration is essential to ensure the effectiveness of corporate disaster philanthropy. Companies should also pay particular attention to engaging the workforce in this area—from the planning through implementation phase—which will benefit the company, employees, and communities alike.

About This Report

This report, generously sponsored by E4E Relief, presents key findings and insights from a 27-question survey of the disaster philanthropy practices at 100 companies, undertaken by The Conference Board ESG Center between March and April 2023. It represents the fourth iteration of this survey, as part of long-standing research into how companies respond to major natural disasters—including their resources, tools, processes, and partnerships—and their expectations and priorities for the future. Survey data have been supplemented with additional insights and learnings from Member companies of The Conference Board.

About the Sponsor

For 20 years, **E4E Relief** has been the leading provider of emergency financial relief programs, rapidly responding to disasters and hardships on behalf of corporations around the world. E4E Relief empowers global companies to provide meaningful financial relief to employees and other key stakeholders when they need it most. Since 2020, E4E Relief has received more than \$340 million in donations and awarded more than \$240 million in charitable grants, supporting relief efforts for over 6 million people worldwide.

About the Author



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Endnotes

¹ World Meteorological Association, *Atlas of Mortality and Economic Losses from Weather, Climate and Water-Related Hazards*, 1970–2021.

² Corporate disaster philanthropy operates within a larger global ecosystem of humanitarian aid that also includes governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, philanthropic foundations, and individual donors. (See: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Global Humanitarian Overview 2022*.) Although governmental assistance exceeds private contributions, philanthropic actors play a significant role. (See: Development Initiatives, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023*.)

³ Statistics on global philanthropic giving sourced from Candid and the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, *Measuring the State of Disaster Philanthropy*, 2023.

⁴ US Environmental Protection Agency, *Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States*, September 2021.



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