



Corporate Social Responsibility

InSTEDD (Innovative Support to Emergencies, Diseases and Disasters) designs and builds technologies to help improve global health, safety, and sustainable development, particularly during disasters and disease outbreaks



The issue

Effective disaster response requires a reliable flow of timely, accurate and complete information, and yet during a disaster critical communication delays often hamper life-saving efforts.



Cisco support helps InSTEDD improve collaboration and communication to better deliver critical services when natural disasters or health or humanitarian crises arise.

InSTEDD designs and uses open source information and communication technology (ICT) to help its partners around the world improve information flow and knowledge sharing, so they can better deliver critical services to vulnerable populations. InSTEDD, with Cisco and Cisco Foundation support of US\$275,000 in cash grants, has been developing an emergency response coordination program for the American Red Cross, initially within the San Francisco Bay Area, and scaling throughout its national network.



Networks

Human Networks:

Interaction designers, software and communication engineers, crisis response staff, American Red Cross staff, and volunteers of the Bay Area who collaborated to envision and build Watchfire

Technology Networks:

Mobile technology, Voice and VoIP, SMS, GPS, cloud applications



85%

decrease in the amount of time it takes to recruit volunteers to disaster sites



100%

of interviewees* noted the tool's best feature was its speedy call-down process that saved time coordinating Disaster Action Response teams



3.4 Million

people could be reached through American Red Cross teams covering the nine Bay Area pilot counties



87%

of interviewees* felt the tool met or exceeded their expectations

* Members of American Red Cross' Disaster Action Teams, a local response unit, following evaluation in test scenarios.

you + networks = impact^x



The Issue

During natural disasters or emergencies, nearly 95 percent of people are rescued by neighbors or "citizen volunteers," and they have an 80 percent chance of survival if they're rescued during the "Golden Day"—the first 24 hours following a disaster. Citizen volunteers and first responders from an array of agencies need a well-coordinated rescue effort to share information and make disaster response plans in a timely manner. Yet, it's a challenge when life-threatening gaps in communication and knowledge-sharing occur. An early detection and response system—based on open source tools and ICT technology that is customized to serve local needs—could help disaster coordinators assemble volunteers more quickly, thereby reducing mortality, and accelerating recovery.

Human Networks

InSTEDD's team of public health experts, scientists and software engineers work with a network of governments, universities, corporations, international health organizations, humanitarian NGOs and local communities around the world to identify opportunities to improve collaboration, and knowledge sharing, to better deliver critical services during disaster scenarios.

Technology Networks

With Cisco's support, InSTEDD is developing a rapid recruitment tool—called Watchfire—for the American Red Cross, initially for its nine San Francisco Bay Area chapters, and then to be scaled and integrated with the American Red Cross' national headquarters. Watchfire uses GPS, voice, and text messages to contact only those Disaster Action Team members who are in closest proximity to the disaster, or who have indicated they are available to respond and have the right skills, and then deploy them as quickly as possible. It is mobile-based and geo-aware, and helps the American Red Cross organize volunteer teams, maintain schedules, and track skills and contact information.

Watchfire can also be used by governments, public agencies, NGOs, and community-based networks who rely on volunteers to provide service in times of crisis. Already, the technology is being adopted by another Cisco partner, NetHope. NetHope is a consortium of international humanitarian organizations working to improve crisis relief efforts in the developing world through the strategic use of technology.

"Personally I feel [Watchfire] will be one of the best things we can do for our coordinators. Instead of having to pick up the phone and call 20 to 30 volunteers just to get someone out on a call, this will make calls for you."

– Justin Perry, Disaster Services Lead
Co-chair, San Mateo County, American Red Cross

More Information

To contact Cisco about its partnership with InSTEDD, please visit:

csr.cisco.com/contact

Impact^x

In initial test scenarios, Watchfire has reduced by 85 percent the amount of time it takes the ARC to recruit volunteers to disaster sites. InSTEDD estimates that when the program is implemented through the American Red Cross, it could ultimately reach as many as 3.4 million people.

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Cisco Corporate Social Responsibility

We believe that businesses have a responsibility to operate in ways that respect and ultimately benefit people, communities, and the planet we live on; we call this Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Our core CSR philosophy is that impact multiplies whenever human and technology networks combine to solve a problem.

This is why we approach CSR the same way we approach business—by applying our technology, employee expertise, and partnerships. We are focused on four primary goals: improving the well-being of people and communities around the world, reducing our environmental impact and helping our customers do the same, conducting our business ethically, and creating a workplace where our employees thrive.