

# Emergency Preparedness

**The Guatemalan-Maya Center**  
**Mariana Blanco**

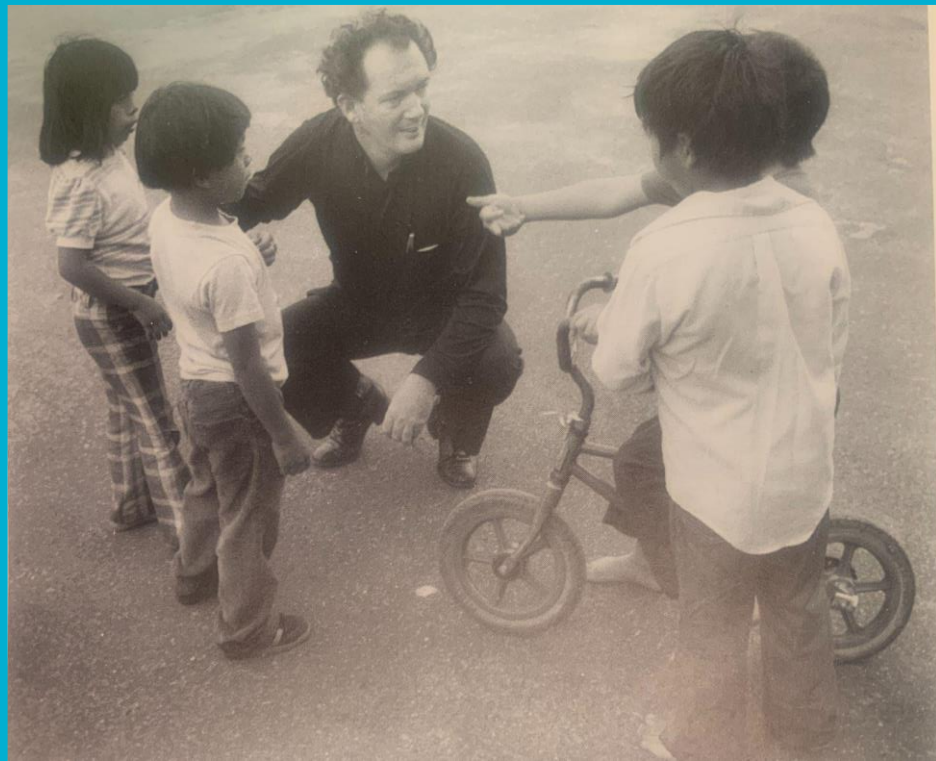
# The Guatemalan-Maya Center

The work of the Center began in Palm Beach county in the 80's as Father Frank was the head of the Archdiocese of Palm Beach County's Migration and Refugee Services and was formally incorporated in 1992.

Located in Lake Worth,  
Florida



# Father Frank; Founder and Executive Director



Father Frank in Indiantown  
pictured with the migrant  
children.

*'The Children of the Maya'*

# Father Frank; Founder and Executive Director

The foundation of the Center and the mission has always held advocacy at the core of our work.

Most importantly, Father Frank has worked with the team to ensure we are working daily to uplift the Maya and to empower them in their “new” community.



# Who do we serve?

- ★ People from 28 different countries
- ★ After-school program and early literacy programs for children of day-laborers
- ★ People who don't qualify for county or city resources
- ★ While we serve anyone requesting services, we are the home for the Indigenous Maya.



# How to manage an emergency or crisis



- ★ Figure out what the crisis is (always think ahead!)
- ★ Does this affect an individual or a group?
- ★ Find out what language the family speaks
- ★ Do they have a medical emergency?
- ★ What do we need to collect for them? Are they in need of items?
- ★ Who can we ask for help? Are there has financial resources available?

# Examples of Emergencies - Zika

- ★ Zika virus - “non-urgent”
  - Send out text messages with latest updates about the virus
  - Go door-to-door to educate the community on leaving still-water in their yards (buckets, tires, pots)
- ★ Educate community members when picking up other materials
  - Every pregnant woman picking up diapers would get a brief educational flyer and would talk to an outreach member about dangers of Zika for pregnant women.

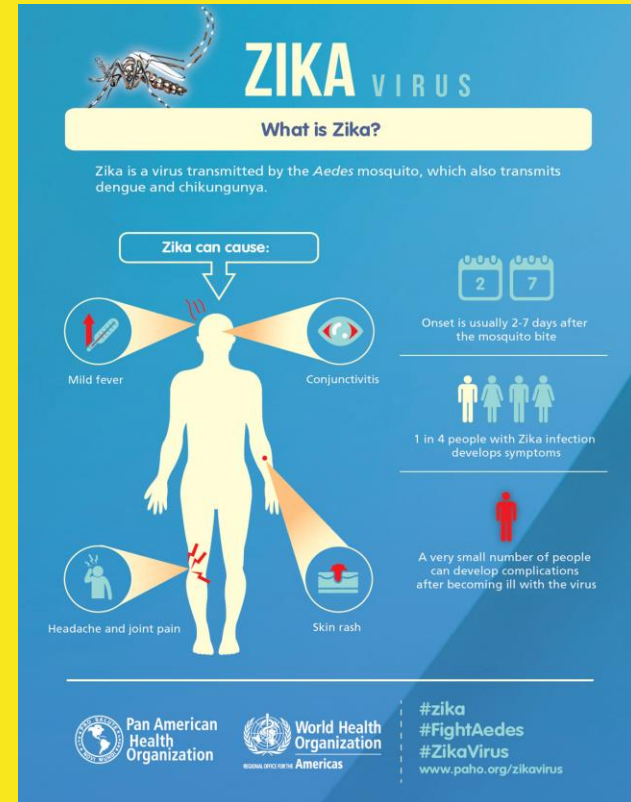


Image by the Pan American Health Org

# Examples of Emergencies - COVID-19



- ★ Educating ourselves and the community about the latest updates about COVID-19 and it's spread
- ★ Farmworkers in our area weren't given PPE, but had to continue working during the pandemic so we collected PPE and distributed it to them
- ★ Had staff and volunteers go inside the homes of our people and disinfect COVID positive homes
- ★ Educated the community about the importance of getting tested
  - Testing positive meant losing 2 weeks of work



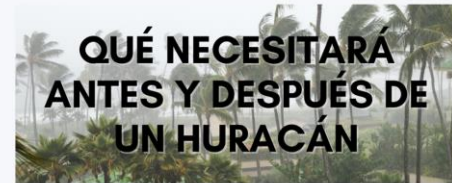
## Examples of Emergencies - COVID-19 (Cont)

- ★ Advocacy for our community members in order to obtain the vaccines in our area
  - Hosted a public prayer in front of the health department to create awareness about an emergency that was being treated as an immigration issue
- ★ Became an evening testing site and eventually an evening vaccination site



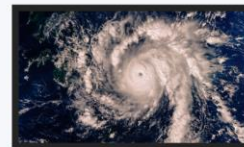
# Hurricane Preparedness

- ★ Have a disaster plan in place in case of emergencies
- ★ Have 3 plans of action; pre, during and post disaster
- ★ Distribute updates in form of graphics with limited writing and audio messages when possible.



- Un suministro de agua y comida
- Medicina y botiquín de primeros auxilios
  - Linternas y baterías
  - Artículos personales
- Documentos importantes en una bolsa Ziploc como identificación, registros médicos, etc.

*Es MUY importante que obtenga su pasaporte de la vacuna Covid-19 en caso de que necesite ir a un refugio, para que usted sea su familia esté protegida.*



# Pre-Hurricane

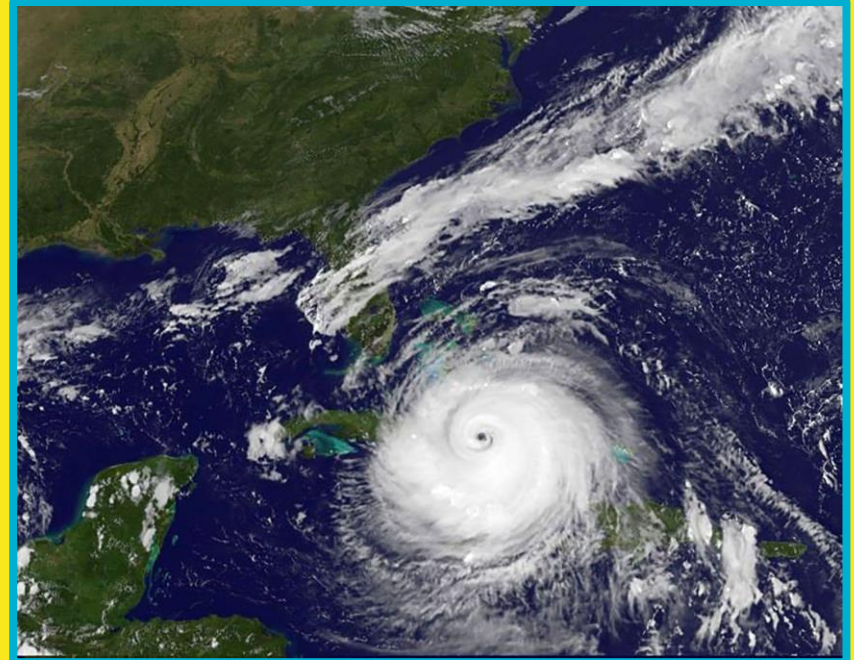
- ★ Prepare our staff
  - Send out memorandum for hurricanes and plan with each program the roles
- ★ Ensure the community is informed about hurricane
  - Go in mobile home communities with loudspeaker
  - Be creative with the forms of communication
- ★ See what shelters are available and for who
- ★ Assign staff/volunteers to be on call as translators for shelters
  - Shelters for pregnant women, pets, other special needs
- ★ Send voice notes in indigenous languages with updates as they happen

## Pre Hurricane (Cont.)

- ★ Announce hurricane updates/resources on the radio
  - Go on as much as your local radio stations will allow you to
- ★ Collect and distribute hurricane materials
- ★ Contact your partner agencies to see what materials they can offer and visa-versa.
  - Ex. The food bank would provide us with water bottles and canned food to distribute in case of a hurricane
  - Our partners in Duracell Latin America provide us with batteries for flashlights
  - Contact consulates and help the community obtain a valid document before the hurricane

# During the Hurricane

- ★ Call intake list to see if they're okay and need assistance
  - Break down list between staff and volunteers
- ★ Assign staff members and volunteers to be on call in case of emergencies
- ★ Send out updates through our text messaging service/facebook
- ★ Switch out landlines to be answered by staff/volunteers



# Post Hurricane



- ★ Call all members on the intake log
- ★ Canvass the neighborhoods
- ★ Place flyers up in grocery stores,
- ★ Create list of items needed by community
- ★ Begin collection
  - Use local radio stations to let community members know of resources
  - Use local newspaper to obtain contributions/materials

## Simple texting

- ★ Service we use is approximately \$15k a year worth of text messages
- ★ Expensive service but most valuable in terms of getting messages out to the community
- ★ Way of messaging that will work for your community
- ★ Consider partnering with other agencies that might share a need for this service and split the cost
- ★ Look for grants that could cover this cost

La tormenta tropical Eta se dirige hacia Florida. Asegúrese de tener suficiente comida y agua para la semana y de tener linternas también guarden bien sus documentos importante en un lugar seguro, no manejen si hay inundaciones o evite líneas eléctricas caídas, si hay una emergencia muy grave llame 911. En caso de que se corte la electricidad si pierde electricidad y viven en la Ciudad de Lake Worth pueden llamar al [5615337300](tel:5615337300). Si usan luz con FPL llamar [1-833-437-5466](tel:1-833-437-5466) o [1-844-848-0465](tel:1-844-848-0465).

Pongan mucha atención si las autoridades te dan una order de evacuación por favor evacúen en un Centro de refugio ustedes pueden llamar Cruz roja [1-800-733-2767](tel:1-800-733-2767) y también pueden llamar al 211.

## Example of Simple Texting during a hurricane

Pongan mucha atención si las autoridades te dan una order de evacuación por favor evacúen en un Centro de refugio ustedes pueden llamar Cruz roja [1-800-733-2767](tel:1-800-733-2767) y también pueden llamar al 211. Además, si envía un mensaje de texto con la palabra HURACÁN al [44332](tel:44332), se le enviará una guía de huracanes en español.

La escuela del condado de palm beach también estará cerrada mañana.

Si necesitan clarificación pueden llamar al Centro Maya al [\(561\) 547-0085](tel:561-547-0085).

Español: <https://txt.so/JLMCNC>  
Popti ': <https://txt.so/AJDAQA>  
Mam: <https://txt.so/ICNLQN>  
Q'anjob'al: <https://txt.so/PVKPED>

Responder stop para detener



# Ask for help!

- ★ Go through all your resources and see who in your community is doing what!
- ★ People are willing to volunteer, you won't know unless you ask
- ★ If not physically, they are willing to contribute materials or donations
- ★ Go on the radio, social media and tell people what you need. If other areas weren't affected, they might be willing to help with some of their resources!



# Thank you!

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