

# Grantee: American Samoa

## Grant: P-19-AS-60-ODD2

### April 1, 2022 thru June 30, 2022 Performance Report

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<b>Grant Number:</b> P-19-AS-60-ODD2	<b>Obligation Date:</b>	<b>Award Date:</b>
<b>Grantee Name:</b> American Samoa	<b>Contract End Date:</b> 03/25/2028	<b>Review by HUD:</b> Reviewed and Approved
<b>Grant Award Amount:</b> \$23,039,000.00	<b>Grant Status:</b> Active	<b>QPR Contact:</b> Agnes Lamositele
<b>LOCCS Authorized Amount:</b> \$0.00	<b>Estimated PI/RL Funds:</b> \$0.00	
<b>Total Budget:</b> \$23,039,000.00		

## Disasters:

### Declaration Number

FEMA-4357-AS

## Narratives

### Disaster Damage:

Public Law 116-20 stipulates the appropriation of \$2.43 billion through the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program in response to Presidential declared disasters in 2018 and 2019. These CDBG-DR program funds are authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) relevant to disaster relief and long-term recovery for a major disaster that occurred in 2018 or 2019.

American Samoa was devastated by Tropical Storm Gita, also known as DR-4357, and in December 2019, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced an allocation of \$23 million in CDBG-DR program funds to the Territory of American Samoa. This allocation was in accordance with Public Law 116-20 signed by President Trump on June 6, 2019 to address the unmet needs and long-term recovery efforts due to widespread damages caused by Tropical Storm Gita. Flooding from heavy rain, power outages and damaged buildings (residential and commercial) from strong winds were widespread across American Samoa, where rainfall in excess of 150 mm (6 inches) was reported.

CDBG-DR funds under Public Law 116-20 are allocated directly to the American Samoa Government (ASG). As the American Samoa administering agency for HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program over the years, the American Samoa Department of Commerce (ASDOC) is also the designated grantee for CDBG-DR. Like the administration of CDBG funds, the ASDOC will ensure CDBG-DR funds are intended to benefit low -and-moderate-income households, although limited to eligible activities of:

- Immediate Disaster Relief
- Long-term Recovery
- Restoration of Infrastructure and Housing
- Economic Revitalization; and,
- Hazard

Our methodology to determine American Samoa's unmet needs and calculating funding allocation in accordance with the Federal Register Notices is based on home inspection data for FEMA's Individual Assistance Program and Public Assistance Program. This also includes Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loan program. HUD calculated unmet housing needs as the number of housing units with unmet needs times the estimated cost to repair those units less repair funds already provided by FEMA and SBA.

### Recovery Needs:

Gale force winds of over 50 miles per hour (mph) with gusts up to 145mph were recorded for TS Gita. It brought 30 inches of torrential rainfall with severe flooding, landslides, and over \$16 million worth of destroyed crops across the island.

A Presidential disaster declaration for American Samoa also allowed FEMA to provide individual and public assistance to the Territory. During the initial assessment, over 5,400 homes were identified to have been impacted by the tropical storm. Aside from residential homes, small businesses, and public infrastructure (roads, airport, seaport, utilities and telecommunications) were seriously damaged too.

a) Immediate Disaster Relief  
A Joint Task Force was immediately activated on February 9, 2018 to operate on a 24- hour basis and to conduct





limited funding, the team prioritized benefit for the neediest households that were impacted by the tropical storm. An intake application process took place on October 9-22, 2018 to review all applications for assistance. The dissemination of food assistance benefits began on December 21, 2019 as soon as funding became available to the American Samoa Government. The following data is an overall view of the clients or beneficiaries served by the DHSS.

Disaster Relief Food Assistance Program

**Total Applied**

**7,359 individuals or 1,937**

**Total Approved**

**2,325 from 903 households**

**Total Benefits Issued**

**2,178 individuals (147 didn't claim benefits due to being away from the territory for the holidays or deceased when benefits were issued by December 21, 2018)**

**Value of Benefits**

**\$185 / person**

**Budget Allocation**

**\$70,000 for Administrative Costs**

**\$430,000 for Benefits**

Disaster Case Management Programs were also provided although it delayed due to challenging issues that the program did not launch until February 2019. As a result, 206 cases were identified and all needed 100% home repairs. Only 6 cases were closed with 200 pending. Disaster cleanup efforts can also trigger emotional stress and strain on families. The overwhelming feeling that each survivor cannot control the situation can cause emotional crisis. Village and community homes which we commonly refer to as guest houses are cultural spaces where village events occur. It is also the center of any community or village to gather to meet, celebrate, mourn or gather for a big family or village event. These traditional houses or guesthouses were not deemed eligible for repair and it led to an unmet need for many whose guesthouses were severely damaged by Tropical Storm Gita.

Outreach efforts were conducted by the Disaster Case Management program in collaboration between ASG (in this case the DHSS was the administering agency) and a non-government organization called the American Samoa Volunteer Agencies Active in Disasters (ASVOAD). Both groups worked towards identifying any and all unmet needs. The outreach programs enabled this public-private partnership to identify the types of available programs on island. These outreach programs included community groups like farmers and ethnic communities like the Fijian, Chinese, Korean, Tongan, and Filipino to

ensure they all understand the available resources they can seek assistance based on their needs.

Overall, the preliminary damage assessments (PDA) from FEMA had nearly 5,500 applicants with over 7,816 approved for assistance. This FEMA assistance was valued at \$20.3 million in individual assistance and over \$11 million in Small Business Administration loans.

The Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) was in charge of registering survivors for assistance. It also included streamlining the process to implement a pre-registration process that documented a total of 9,883 applicants as of May 1st, 2018. The DRC identified 7,816 for Other Needed Assistance (ONA) and Housing Assistance (HA) with 682 for Small Business Administration for both business and residential.

As of September 2018, both FEMA and SBA provided assistance to American Samoa residents as a result of Tropical Storm Gita.

Tropical Storm Gita - Individual Assistance

**ASG / FEMA Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA)**

**5,495 Homes**

**Registered Individual Assistance (IA)**

**7,816 Individuals**

**Approved for Housing Assistance (HA)**

**3,653 Individuals**

**Approved for Other Needed Assistance (ONA)**

**4,900 Individuals**

**Approved for Small Business Administration (SBA)**

**682 Residential & Businesses**

While there were 3,486 applications for SBA, only 682 were approved. Only 4 deaths as a result of TS Gita were assisted under ONA. This is in relation to the fact that some of these victims were unable to receive emergency health care during the storm, as well as medicine. Some victims died as a result of worsening health conditions due to the tropical storm. A total of 24 individuals received maximum awards for Individual and Household Program (IHP) assistance due to home losses (destroyed by TS Gita).

**b) Long Term Recovery Efforts**

American Samoa's long-term recovery from Tropical Storm Gita is focused on restoring its critical infrastructure, revitalizing the economy and incorporating resiliency and sustainability in housing structures across the territory to mitigate damages from future disasters.

Tualauta is the largest district in the territory that sustained damages in homes, businesses and critical infrastructure as a result of severe flooding in the area. To date, the area remains heavily impacted by flash floods during the rainy season. Various homes across the territory also remain uninhabited due to various reasons including ineligibility of individuals/families to apply or even the federal assistance awarded to them wasn't sufficient to bring the home up to

standard and livable conditions.

American Samoa’s CDBG-DR Action Plan will provide more details on local and federal response and recovery efforts to date.

Overall	This Report Period	To Date
<b>Total Projected Budget from All Sources</b>	\$1,151,950.00	\$1,151,950.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$1,151,950.00	\$1,151,950.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Budget</b>	\$1,151,950.00	\$1,151,950.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$1,151,950.00	\$1,151,950.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Obligated</b>	\$1,151,950.00	\$1,151,950.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$1,151,950.00	\$1,151,950.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Funds Drawdown</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Program Funds Drawdown</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Program Income Drawdown</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Program Income Received</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Funds Expended</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>HUD Identified Most Impacted and Distressed</b>	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Other Funds</b>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Match Funds	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Non-Match Funds	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00

## Progress Toward Required Numeric Targets

Requirement	Target	Projected	Actual
<b>Overall Benefit Percentage</b>			
B-19-DV-60-0001	70.00%	.00%	.00%
B-19-DV-60-0002	70.00%	.00%	.00%
<b>Minimum Non Federal Match</b>			
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$ .00	\$ .00	\$ .00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$ .00	\$ .00	\$ .00
<b>Overall Benefit Amount</b>			
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$10,770,935.00	\$ .00	\$ .00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$4,550,000.00	\$ .00	\$ .00
<b>Limit on Public Services</b>			
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$2,480,850.00	\$ .00	\$ .00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$975,000.00	\$ .00	\$ .00



**Limit on Admin/Planning**

B-19-DV-60-0001	\$3,307,800.00	\$1,151,950.00	\$ .00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$1,300,000.00	\$ .00	\$ .00

**Limit on Admin**

B-19-DV-60-0001	\$826,950.00	\$1,151,950.00	\$ .00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$325,000.00	\$ .00	\$ .00

**Most Impacted and Distressed**

B-19-DV-60-0001	\$16,539,000.00	\$1,151,950.00	\$ .00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$6,500,000.00	\$ .00	\$ .00

**Overall Progress Narrative:**

AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT  
Department of Commerce  
Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Relief/Mitigation Grant  
2022

Performance Progress REPORT

Reporting Period:  
March 31, 2022 – June 30, 2022  
Date Submitted:  
August 2, 2022  
Completed By: Agnes Lamositele

**Progress Indicator Information**

1. Describe any challenges concerning the progress of the project:  
During the reporting period, minimal challenges arose concerning the progress of the Project. On February 15, 2022, a new Project Coordinator was hired. However, the Project Coordinator had to work remotely because of the Government shutdown and limited flights coming into the Territory. The Project Coordinator’s first reported day to the office was April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Upon arrival at the office, acclimation was a challenge as components of the project were moving targets that needed identifying and addressing. Drawdown packets were one of the challenges. Being this project is the first of its kind, the setup was different from other grants the Department of Commerce has accustomed to. One of them was the DRGR access. The project staff and its support staff from other Department divisions had to request Technical Assistance from ICF, a HUD-assigned TA provider. A weekly TA call to assist and support the Project staff was established to acclimate to the set-up of the project. The DRGR access was provided and assigned to the team, and a TA was set up to walk the staff through the system’s kinks. In addition to the setup of the Project, the compilation and identification of data sets were also provided by the TA so project staff could understand the basic research fundamentals of data sets to best collect and compile in preparation for the submission of its Substantial Amendment. In realizing the many factors of gathering the data for the Substantial Amendment, the project staff had to request a deadline extension with HUD. Finally, the HUD grantor identified HUD requirements such as a website set-up. As a grantee, a public access website is required for general information and public participation. Through TA assistance, the project identified means of acquiring a website and reached a webpage through the department site. Through these challenges, success indeed followed and described in the next section.

2. Describe any successes/challenges to the CDBG-DR implementation and any additional changes that are currently in use or are being implemented/planned, if any:

During this reporting period, successes followed after staff underwent weekly TA sessions with ICF and via HUD Exchange workshop that was conducted virtually. Project staff were able to attend the HUD exchange and engaged in breakout sessions. These sessions provided a lot of resources and information that was helpful to the acclimation of the Project Coordinator and Project Engineer. During the bi-weekly with the Hud project officers, staff presented issues with the website requirements, and project officers provided guidance and support on how to achieve and maximize the needs of the website. In addition, the staff could compile the drawdown packets and optimize the requirements. On July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, HUD Representative Mr. Kevin Neil was able to visit and provide a lot of technical support for the Project and its staff. His visit increases clarity and guidance to best structure and implements project goals and objectives. One of the highlights of Mr. Neil’s visit was his ability to guide the project to understand best the DRGR



creating of a voucher and guide the project to best structure its financial drawdowns. In understanding the system, the Project staff recognized a lot of potential and room for growth to drive the project and maximize its benefits, which will soon show in the coming months.

## Project Narrative

1. Describe project successes/challenges. Also, highlight any changes in goals and objectives:

Our most significant challenges centered around the COVID-19 pandemic. Until February 2022, we were on track to fulfill the project's needs. Due to the pandemic, face-to-face interaction was limited; therefore, new processes for the Department had to be re-visited to accommodate the project. As aforementioned, the American Samoa Government experienced its first COVID breakout, and a real COVID threat finally hit its shores. Although COVID was two years old around the world, American Samoa has managed to keep it outside its borders, a feat no other country has managed. Therefore, during this time, the Department had already faced challenges with hiring new staff and getting the project staff acclimated to the project. The systemic changes to adjust to a government shutdown and telework schedule... The pandemic necessitated that we switch our focus to delivering project goals with remote support, which resulted in slow and slow-paced progress. As the saying goes, "Slowly but surely."

2. Explain any differences between planned and actual objectives and corrective actions to compensate for project deficiencies.

The differences in planned and actual objectives are as follows:

As initially requested and planned, the CDBG DR action plan described the unmet need for its beneficiaries for the following grant activities; Rehabilitation of Homes, Economic Development & Rehabilitation of Homes. These activities were initially requested in 2020 when the unmet need was high. However, as with the evolution of time and priorities, the Department and its stakeholders have recognized a significant threat to all these plans: flooding. The Department of Commerce and its stakeholders's Department of Public Works (DPW), Governor's Office (GO), and Office of Petroleum & Disaster Assistance Management (ODAPM), have unanimously recognized that even with its Mitigation efforts to address and alleviate flooding, the protection of the beneficiaries still required the full attention of the CDBG DR. This decision was not made overnight. This decision was reached after numerous stakeholder meetings since the Grant was established. Over time, as time has shown through seasonal rainfall and weekly weather reports, it has been recognized that flooding will continue to be a threat as long as the Tualauta Drainage is not built to provide protection. In addition to the flooding, the DPW conducted a cost analysis to assess the costs per household for home elevation versus drainage project costs. The results were phenomenal as they ruled in favor of the drainage to be the most cost-effective and beneficial beneficiary. This was a data-driven decision, and it is now the actual objective.

3. Note any changes in or concerns about CDBG-DR's financial status that may affect the implementation of the operation of services.

During this reporting period, it is recognized that the CDBG DR will only have a single project and, therefore, will allocate all of its planning dollars to the project category of its funding.

4. Is the grantee on track to expend 100% funding by the end of this contract year (Yes / No)?

Yes. The grantee is expected to expend funding by the end of the contract year.

5. Estimate the amount of accumulated/projected unexpended funds for the year, if any, and propose plans to expend those funds by the end of the year, time permitting.

During this reporting period, estimation is not available.

6. Provide information disseminated to others about the project to the media or professional publications, if any.  
 N/A. However, the CDBG-DR is expected to publish its Substantial Amendment for Public Comment and will be available online.

7. Note any technical assistance needs the project may have.  
 The AS CDBG-DR has received technical assistance with ICF and HUD Exchange. During this reporting period, the project was anticipating a site Visit by Kevin O'Neil. Nevertheless, It will continue to have weekly TA calls with ICF and bi-monthly calls with Project officers Michelle Cushing and HUD Rep. Kevin O'Neil.

## Project Summary

Project #, Project Title	This Report	To Date	
	Program Funds Drawdown	Project Funds Budgeted	Program Funds Drawdown
9999, Restricted Balance	\$0.00	\$18,500,000.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$13,280,562.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$5,219,438.00	\$0.00
DR_Admin, DR_Admin	\$0.00	\$1,151,950.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$1,151,950.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
DR_Planning, DR_Planning	\$0.00	\$3,387,050.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0001	\$0.00	\$2,106,488.00	\$0.00
B-19-DV-60-0002	\$0.00	\$1,280,562.00	\$0.00

