Recovery Assistance Trends and Lessons from Hurricanes Ike and Harvey

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INTRODUCTION

Using SBA Loan data from recent hurricanes in Galveston County, TX we want to know:
1. How consistent is the SBA Loan Program across events?
2. What should households, businesses, and nonprofits expect in terms of availability, amount and timing of assistance?

BACKGROUND

Hurricane Ike:
Made landfall on Saturday September 13, 2008.
The areas hit hardest in Galveston County included Dickinson, Kemah, League City, and Clear Lake Shores.
Out of 106,671 households in Galveston County, 19,574 were damaged as a result of this storm.
Out of 26,410 businesses in Galveston County, 19,574 were damaged as a result of this storm.

Hurricane Harvey:
The areas hit hardest in Galveston County included Dickinson, Kemah, League City, and Friendswood.
Out of 121,423 households in Galveston County, 91,543 were damaged as a result of this storm.
Out of 106,617 households in Galveston County, 19,574 were damaged as a result of this storm.
Out of 26,410 businesses in Galveston County, 19,574 were damaged as a result of this storm.

CONCLUSIONS

1. How consistent is the SBA Loan Program across events?
The number of SBA loan applications was greater for Hurricane Ike. However, Hurricane Harvey had a greater average loan amount for homes while Hurricane Ike had a greater average loan amount for businesses.
While most of the loan approvals for Hurricane Ike were focused on the island part of the county, Hurricane Harvey loan approvals were focused on the mainland part of the county.

Lastly, during Hurricane Ike the turn-around time for approved applications was considerably faster despite a higher volume of applications.

2. What should households, businesses, and nonprofits expect in terms of availability, amount and timing of assistance?
A limitation that we found is that we only looked at one type of loan for businesses and homeowners, our data might not show the full picture for what disaster assistance looked like on average for every single business and homeowner.
Also, the date to approval does not necessarily affect how soon funds were disbursed to those that got approved for a loan.