

LDS Charities Provides Aid

Since the earliest days of the Restoration, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have been known for their determination to reach out and lift up those who are suffering.

In recent years, Church members and others have, through generous contributions, provided the means for Church Humanitarian Services programs to bless the lives of people throughout the world. In 2013 alone, LDS humanitarian programs helped more than 10.5 million people in 130 countries.

This effort extends from providing comfort and life-sustaining goods to making clean water available; to training midwives and doctors to save the lives of thousands of newborn babies; to providing wheelchairs. In addition, the Church assists with vision care and training, immunizations, and growing nutritious food in selected communities.

Refugee Assistance

The Church has made consistent and considerable effort to aid refugees as well as others suffering from conflicts and food shortages. Recently:

- The Church donated thousands of tents and basic food supplies to families in Chad and constructed hand-pump wells, latrines, and shower buildings in refugee camps in Burkina Faso.
- In Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and the Kurdish region, LDS

Charities is distributing food packets, blankets, medical supplies, hygiene kits, bedding, and winter clothing. In Iraq and the Kurdish region, wheelchairs and other mobility equipment have been delivered to people injured in conflicts.

- In Gaza, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and powdered milk were donated to the central hospital.
- In Israel, ultrasound equipment was donated to a medical facility.
- In Ukraine and Russia, the Church has partnered with the United Nations Development Program to provide food, bedding, clothing, and personal hygiene items for 30,000 people displaced during civil unrest.

LDS Charities works to remain politically neutral and to help people of any faith.

Relief Efforts

The Church also responds when natural disasters occur.

- In Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Church has engaged 1,600 local volunteers to provide training on how to avoid Ebola and provided food and basic sanitation and medical supplies.
- Following flooding caused by a heavy monsoon in Pakistan and India, the Church provided food, hygiene kits, and medical supplies.
- In Tonga, a cyclone destroyed hundreds of homes, including the homes of 116 member families. Members will assist with the rebuilding of their homes. They receive training about how to construct their own shelter and are then asked to assist at least

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH JANE WEAVER, CHURCH NEWS



The Amman Jordan District president and his daughter (right) meet refugees.

four other people in building theirs. The Church is also restoring crops and providing training in home gardening.

- In Mexico, when a hurricane left thousands of homes damaged or destroyed, local Church leaders provided food and water to affected members, and the Church worked with the state government to provide food kits.

What You Can Do

Donations to the Humanitarian Aid Fund enable the Church to respond immediately to crises. In addition, wherever they live, members can demonstrate Christlike love, provide service, and build respect for all people. Noticing refugees and immigrants in our own communities, or those weathering a personal disaster, and offering them friendship, interest, and a welcoming environment is a Christlike act that will never be in vain.

Through its humanitarian arm, the Church strives to implement the counsel of President Thomas S. Monson that “we can strengthen one another; we have the capacity to notice the unnoticed. When we have eyes that see, ears that hear, and hearts that know and feel, we can reach out and rescue” (“The Call to Serve,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 47; *Liahona*, Jan. 2001, 58). ■