



Lutheran
Disaster Response

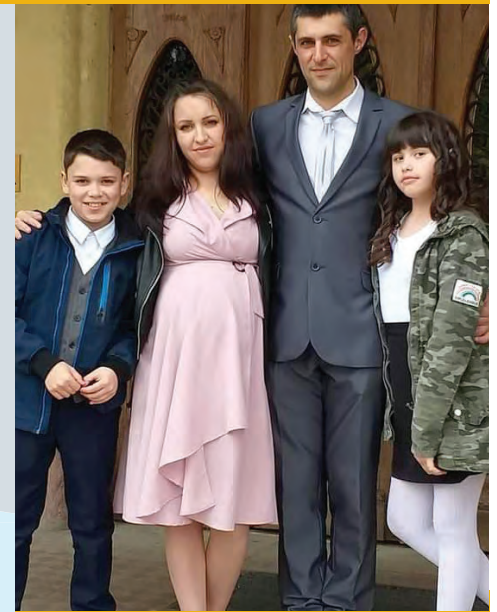


Lutheran Disaster Response is known for and excels at conventional disaster-response work, which includes long-term recovery and addressing immediate needs following hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires and other natural disasters. As Lutheran Disaster Response adapts to escalating and protracted conflict and civil unrest, in addition to traditional disaster response, **your generosity comforts and inspires hope in communities around the world.**

In times of conflict, Lutheran Disaster Response accompanies those who are displaced by political violence, deprived of health care in war-torn areas or faced with other humanitarian crises. It provides emergency assistance such as food, water and shelter, but also long-term support such as education and spiritual care. **Your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response make possible all this work and more.**

Every disaster is different, so each response is unique and centered on the specific needs of the individual community. By working alongside local partners, Lutheran Disaster Response is able to offer holistic support and address a community’s most pressing issues. In this situation report, you’ll read about our individualized responses to conflict in Haiti, Sudan, Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

UKRAINE



Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine started in March 2022. Millions of people, mostly women and children, fled to neighboring countries where they had to establish themselves in new host communities. Lutheran Disaster Response and its partners acted, providing food, clothing and temporary shelter. Since 2022, Lutheran Disaster Response has been active in nine Central and Eastern European countries, including Ukraine, **partnering with 14 organizations and companion churches** to address the ongoing needs of Ukrainian refugees.

“Thank you very much for all the help so far. We are glad there are such good people to help us.”

—Annie, a Ukrainian refugee who found housing for her family in Hungary with support from Lutheran Disaster Response

KEY RESPONSE AREAS:

- **Rehabilitating damaged apartments in Kharkiv**, a city near the Ukraine-Russia border that is frequently targeted by Russian attacks.
- **Converting underground shelters into schools in Kharkiv Oblast.** Since the beginning of the war, most schooling in Ukraine has been online; underground schools provide a safe place for students to be together and learn in person.
- **Helping refugees integrate into host communities in neighboring countries** such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, Moldova and the Czech Republic. Case workers and counselors are helping refugee families identify job opportunities, enroll in the health and education systems, join language classes and receive psychosocial care.
- **Providing education that promotes social inclusion and a sense of community for Roma children** in Hungary, Slovakia and Ukraine. The Roma are an ethnic minority in Europe and have historically been discriminated against.

THE MIDDLE EAST

“We lift our prayers of lament with unceasing hope for an end to this war and a permanent, just solution for the people of Palestine and Israel.”

—Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, in her statement “Praying for Peace Amid Ongoing War in the Middle East.”



Atta Jabr/LWF

On Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas launched an attack on Israel, and the subsequent invasion of Gaza by the Israeli military led to a devastating humanitarian crisis that has continued for over a year. The conflict in Gaza is also impacting communities in the West Bank, where violence against Palestinians has increased. With partners such as Augusta Victoria Hospital and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, Lutheran Disaster Response is accompanying affected communities. As violence spreads to other areas of the region, such as Lebanon, Lutheran Disaster Response has continued to support people impacted by conflict, including those displaced by the war.

KEY RESPONSE AREAS:

- **Supporting Augusta Victoria Hospital in East Jerusalem**, the only hospital that treats Palestinian cancer patients. With support from Lutheran Disaster Response, Augusta Victoria is providing accommodation for patients, their families and hospital staff who are from Gaza and have been unable to return to their homes, so they can all stay close to the hospital.
- **Providing emergency education support**, enabling schools to continue operating even when students’ families cannot pay school fees due to lost income caused by the war. School meals are also important amid food insecurity.
- **Addressing immediate needs for those displaced by war throughout the region**, including shelter, food, water, clothing and other basic necessities.
- **Offering impacted children and youth free psychosocial support through art therapy, facilitated** through art therapy facilitated by students and staff at Dar al-Kalima University. The university is also hosting psychosocial well-being meetings for parents, teachers, health care workers and other caregivers to teach them how to help youth process the violence they are witnessing and experiencing.

Make a gift to Lutheran Disaster Response at ELCA.org/GiveLDR.

SUDAN

In Sudan, fighting broke out between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in April 2023. Millions of Sudanese people were forced from their homes to escape the violence, resettling elsewhere in Sudan or in neighboring countries. Lutheran Disaster Response is active in refugee camps and host communities in Chad, Egypt and South Sudan.



KEY RESPONSE AREAS:

- **Constructing latrines and handwashing stations in refugee camps.** Sanitary and safe water infrastructure helps prevent the spread of waterborne diseases. Sanitation committees were also formed to maintain cleanliness at the latrines and raise awareness about waterborne diseases and the importance of sanitation.
- **Assisting the influx of refugees into Egypt** by finding access to housing and addressing food and medical needs. Many refugee families used their savings to travel to Egypt and now struggle to meet their basic needs.
- **Supporting peace-building efforts and providing immediate needs** such as shelter and food to refugees in South Sudan. Host communities are welcoming Sudanese refugees while also working to resolve conflict between their own ethnic groups.

HAITI

In Haiti, increased gang and group conflict has internally displaced more than 578,000 people. This recent conflict is exacerbating existing socioeconomic challenges and political instability. Haiti is also prone to natural disasters yet has limited resources to adequately respond to them. Lutheran Disaster Response is focused on supporting women-headed households in the Ouest and Sud departments of Haiti, which are underserved by other organizations.

KEY RESPONSE AREAS:

- **Helping families purchase household needs, including food, health care and education.** As many displaced families have lost their sources of income, multipurpose cash transfers help maintain food security and support the local economy.
- **Raising awareness and promoting prevention of violence against women, and providing psychosocial care for survivors.** Gender inequity in Haiti, along with the current mass displacement and conflict, leads to increased cases of violence against women because of more social congestion and less freedom of movement.
- **Holding disaster preparedness training through simulation exercises, as well as establishing early-warning systems.** With more training and preparedness, communities are becoming more resilient when affected by natural disasters.