

# LWRnews

**FEBRUARY 2010**  
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*Affirming God's love for all people, we work with Lutherans and partners  
around the world to end poverty, injustice and human suffering.*



## Emergency Response

*Lutheran World Relief is a ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), individuals and parish groups in international relief, development, advocacy and social responsibility.*

Dear Friends,

The stories were all finished, the pictures selected, and I had even drafted my opening note for this emergency response themed newsletter. Then came the earthquake in Haiti.

As we all know, disasters don't work on a timetable. They strike, paying no attention to our deadlines or schedules. But when they do, we put deadlines aside and spring to action.

As the poorest country in the western hemisphere, Haiti is the least equipped to handle another disaster of magnitude. Our brothers and sisters in Haiti were still struggling to recover from the succession of tropical storms that destroyed homes and crops and claimed lives in 2008. In fact, LWR and partners were still working with communities in Haiti on January 12 when the earth began to move.

Disasters are sometimes natural, sometimes man-made, but they share one thing in common – people, whose lives are interrupted by forces they do not control.

LWR is called to respond to global emergencies, no matter how they manifest. We do so with emergency relief, but also with an eye toward the future. We ask ourselves what makes communities vulnerable to disaster? How can we help them grow stronger?

As we begin the road to help the people in Haiti rebuild their lives, we will surely ask ourselves these and many other questions.

Thank you for keeping the people of Haiti in your prayers and for your support of Lutheran World Relief's vision for a world in which each person, every community and all generations live in justice, dignity and peace.



In Christ,

John A. Nunes  
President and CEO

**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF'S VISION** Empowered by God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ, we envision a world in which each person, every community and all generations live in justice, dignity and peace.

► GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK: 700 Light Street Baltimore, MD 21230 USA | 800.LWR.LWR.2 | [lwr@lwr.org](mailto:lwr@lwr.org)

# NOT ALL PALMS ARE CREATED EQUAL

Choose palms that were harvested with love — love of creation and love of God's people. Eco-Palms preserve God's creation and pay a fair wage to the people who pick them. Order by March 9 to get yours in time for Palm Sunday.

To order, visit [lwr.org/palms](http://lwr.org/palms). ◀



By Nikki Massie

LWR SPECIAL REPORT

# THE ROAD AHEAD FOR HAITI



In many ways, the January 12 earthquake in Haiti was the climax of a chronic emergency that has been quietly playing out on the small island nation for decades.

The 7.0 magnitude quake, the worst in Haiti in 200 years, toppled buildings, damaged roads and left the city of Port-au-Prince in ruins. But even before this catastrophe, Haiti was suffering through a silent and lethal ongoing emergency — unrelenting, crippling poverty.

“Poverty definitely played a major role in the devastation in Haiti,” says Michael Watt, Lutheran World Relief’s director for Latin America programs. “Even prior to the earthquake, people in Haiti did not have reliable access to food, education, medical care and income. The earthquake made everything so much worse.”

In fact, Haiti had not yet recovered from its last major disaster — the 2008 hurricane season when four successive storms caused extensive flooding, deaths, displacement and loss of crops and livestock. LWR was still working with local partner World Neighbors, in response to that disaster, when the earthquake hit.

LWR began responding to the earthquake immediately, working with partners on the ground to make sure people had food, water and shelter. As soon as material resources could get through, LWR sent shipments of health kits, quilts and layettes with partners Church World Service and Lutheran World Federation — members, along with LWR, of the global aid alliance Action by Churches Together. LWR immediately committed \$500,000 worth of material resources to bring relief and comfort to the people of Haiti.

LWR soon learned that areas outside Port-au-Prince were also seriously affected. These smaller, rural communities sustained extensive damage and were especially

vulnerable because most aid was concentrated in the capital city. Initially few, if any, organizations were reaching outside city limits with relief.

With millions homeless and without access to water, food or sanitation, the emergency relief that flooded into the small country is surely sustaining lives. But in order to make those lives better in the future, LWR and partners are approaching relief work with an eye on the overwhelming poverty that makes this region so vulnerable.

As LWR and partners delivered food assistance to affected Haitians, for instance, we looked first to local farmers whose food supplies were not damaged in the quake. Haiti depends heavily on its rural communities for food production and farmers depend on local buyers for income. As relief efforts turn to long-term rehabilitation work, LWR and partners will fight poverty by helping to support farmers and strengthen rural communities.

“Working in this way is very effective because not only are Haitians helping Haitians to recover, but as we help improve income, communities grow stronger and better equipped to handle future disasters,” adds Watt.

The road ahead for Haiti is a long one. There will be many challenges as the people work to rebuild their lives. LWR is preparing to help meet those challenges and move forward.

“It is a bold aspiration, but we don’t simply want to help Haitians reclaim the lives they had before the earthquake,” says LWR president John Nunes. “Working with our local partners and, most importantly, the people of Haiti, LWR will help strengthen communities, readying them to face future challenges. LWR remains as committed as ever to this work with the people of Haiti.”

*Nikki Massie is LWR’s Staff Writer.*

# LWR Quilt and Kit Pipeline

Lutheran World Relief quilts and kits — gifts of your hearts and hands — are unique. In addition to providing comfort, warmth and important tools for daily living, these ordinary items are also beautiful expressions of God's grace and love from one side of the world to the other.

LWR's quilts, kits and layettes are made possible by you — our supporters. Nearly 1,500 tons of quilts and kits make the journey from your hands to the hands of those in need throughout the world each year. See how it's done.

## STEP 1

Throughout the year, volunteers work to make quilts, to assemble layettes and health, school and sewing kits, and to collect soap and sewing fabric. Many of these volunteers then bring the materials to local collections called Ingatherings. They load the quilts, kits and layettes onto trucks headed for one of LWR's warehouses in Minnesota or Maryland. Those who live closer to the warehouses often drop items off directly at the warehouse as the items are finished.



## STEP 3: MONTHS 1-2

In the meantime, LWR staff work with partners overseas to determine where and what items are most needed. Partners must explain who will receive the materials, why the items are needed, and their plan for distributing the materials. Partners must also assure LWR that the materials are stored in a secure, dry facility. LWR then notifies its warehouses to prepare the necessary materials for shipment.

This process takes one to two months.



## STEP 2: MONTHS 1-2

Once items reach the warehouse, they are sorted and packed by staff and volunteers. Quilts are folded in a uniform way and wrapped into bales, while kits are packed into uniform boxes. Both packing methods protect the items from damage during shipping and allow LWR to efficiently pack the materials into shipping containers.

It takes about a month from the time kits and quilts reach the warehouse for them to be processed, repacked and made ready for shipment.



## STEP 4: MONTHS 2-3

Once the quilts, kits and layettes are prepared for shipment, materials travel by ocean freight to the receiving partner in countries around the world.

This process can take from one to two months, depending on which warehouse the materials are sent from and to which country they are going.

## SHIPMENTS TO HAITI:

Because of the magnitude and overwhelming need in Haiti, LWR partners helped us speed up this process to get materials to those in need within two weeks. Once we have a container filled, it takes only one week to get to Haiti.



*LWR health kits and layettes are unloaded in Haiti on January 25.*

## Did you know?

It costs a mere \$2.25 to ship a quilt overseas to someone in need? That means **your gift of \$45 will send 20 quilts**, providing tangible symbols of love for those who often feel they've been forgotten by the world. Learn more and donate to the Project Comfort Fund at [lwr.org/beinvolved/comfort.asp](http://lwr.org/beinvolved/comfort.asp).

### STEP 5: MONTH 4

LWR partners clear the items through customs, transport them to their storage location and count the items. They report to LWR that the materials are received and are ready for distribution.

This takes about two weeks.

The entire process from dropping off your quilts and kits to delivering them into the hands of those in need takes 6 to 12 months, depending on where they are going and the situation in each country. This is why it's so crucial to keep our warehouses stocked throughout the year, so we are ready and able to respond whenever a need arises!



### STEP 6: MONTH 5-12

LWR partners distribute the materials to those who need them most. This may happen immediately upon arrival at a final destination, or may take place over the course of several months, depending on the situation and the need. After distribution, partners file a final report with LWR describing who received the items and the impact they made.

To see a slideshow of recent quilt and kit distributions in the Philippines, go to: [lwr.org/slideshow](http://lwr.org/slideshow).



# DEVOTIONAL

## A CHRISTIAN DEVOTION from LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

By John A. Nunes



### WHEN LIFE IS NOT GOOD, BEAUTIFUL OR FAIR

Lutherans have a plainspoken way of just calling things what they are. As one seminary professor once put it: "It is false optimism that brings ultimate despair" (Gerhard Forde).

Life can collapse without warning. Disasters strike in our personal lives as well as on a global scale. When dreams are destroyed and communities are devastated around the world, Lutheran World Relief hears the cries as a call to deliver hope.

On a frigid, mid-January evening several weeks ago, my 15 year-old son ended up hospitalized after a basketball game. As I sat in the cold emergency room from 9:30 PM until 4:30 AM, consoling him in his personal pain, reports of a tropical catastrophe unfolded on the E.R. TV screen. Haiti, barely surviving in backbreaking poverty, had absorbed a 7.0 magnitude earthquake. On my much smaller telephone screen,

e-mail messages zipped around the world as the LWR team sprung quickly into action.

Regretfully, we must accept the inevitability of disaster and human suffering. Evil is as real as it is often unexplainable. Yet, we are never satisfied to stand by idly watching people die. LWR commits to carry the compassion of U.S. Lutherans into the epicenter of life's earthquakes.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Deeply woven into the fiber of our tradition is the conviction that all people are made in the image of God. If we accept this, we cannot be content to see people hungry or suffering."

### A PRAYER:

**In our world of real despair and horrible disasters, use us, Lord Jesus, to be true agents of the ultimate hope found in you. Amen.**

*John A. Nunes is LWR's President and CEO.*

# Chocolate

*Providing Life's essential element*

Cocoa farmers from Kuapa Kokoo in Ghana are building wells and water pumps with their earnings from Divine Chocolate.

Please give a gift today, and help Kuapa Kokoo bring clean water, life's essential element, to each of their 1,300 villages.

*LWR employees believe so strongly in our work with Kuapa Kokoo, we'll match your gifts, up to \$20,000, from our own pockets!*



► Visit [www.lwr.org/chocolate](http://www.lwr.org/chocolate)

# REMEMBER ME

## Voices of the Silenced in Colombia

*By Mary Duvall*

When we think of emergencies, we often think of natural disasters, such as tsunamis or hurricanes. But emergencies can also arise out of deep-seated conflict. In Colombia, people struggle with and endure violence and displacement every day in their pursuit of peace.

Conflict has raged in Colombia for more than four decades. Tensions among the government, guerilla forces and paramilitary groups have erupted into violence that has forced nearly four million people to flee their homes. The majority of displaced people are women and children.

This April, LWR will launch an interactive exhibit, allowing you a glimpse into the struggles of those most affected by the decades-long conflict in Colombia that has displaced millions of people and claimed the lives of countless human rights leaders.

*Remember Me: Voices of the Silenced in Colombia* brings to life the stories, experiences and struggles of the people of Colombia. Visitors will see and hear the stories of such struggles and learn more about the conflict through visual arts, video testimonies and interactive displays.



The voices of these brave pioneers of peace have been silenced — until now. The haunting images are testimonies that bear witness to the impact of violence on women, children, social leaders and families in Colombian communities. Come, see the experience through their eyes, and let your heart be moved.

This traveling exhibit kicks off on April 18, 2010 at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. To learn more and to check out the schedule, visit [remember.lwr.org](http://remember.lwr.org).

*Mary Duvall is LWR's Grassroots Outreach Coordinator.*



## honoring your Hearts and Hands

Lutheran World Relief is honoring your dedication and service as LWR quilters and kit-makers with our new **Hearts & Hands Honor Roll**. Log on to [lwr.org/honorroll](http://lwr.org/honorroll) or call **1.800.LWR.LWR.2** to add your name.

To show our gratitude, we'll send you a limited edition **Hearts & Hands pin** exclusively designed for LWR by Fair Trade artisans in Ecuador.

**Quantities are limited, so log on or call today!**

*One pin per person.*

▶ [lwr.org/honorroll](http://lwr.org/honorroll) | 1.800.LWR.LWR.2



700 Light Street  
Baltimore, MD 21230  
USA  
lwr.org  
1-800-LWR-LWR-2

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PHOTOS BY Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance

# The people of Haiti still need your help.

LWR continues to provide much-needed resources to the people of Haiti. We need your help to ensure LWR has the resources to respond in Haiti and around the world. Set your hearts and hands to work with a kit-making or quilting project today.

- ▶ Visit [lwr.org/beinvolved](http://lwr.org/beinvolved) or call **1.800.LWR.LWR2** for quilting and kit-making guidelines.

