

God's Love

IN ACTION



LUTHERAN
WORLD RELIEF

IN THIS ISSUE:

♥ **LOVING THE HARDEST TO REACH**

How you are helping displaced families

🌀 **HURRICANE UPDATE**

Your impact in North Carolina and beyond

★ **BULLETIN BOARD POSTER INSIDE!**

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DEAR PARTNER IN MINISTRY,

After a long day of being pulled in many directions, is there anything better than opening your door and finding your slippers or your favorite chair? Or maybe you have a garden, a pet or beloved neighbor that brings you joy.

There really is no place like home.

Sadly, **122.6 million people** globally were displaced from their homes due to war, disaster or other tragedy in 2024. Some had to run for their lives. Others watched as everything washed away.

Through our ministry together, your congregation helped thousands of displaced neighbors find comfort, nourishment and income last year. When you add up this impact over 80 years, I am humbled by how tireless and far-reaching our Lutheran hospitality really is.

They say home is where the heart is. I am so grateful that you and your church care so generously for our displaced neighbors — opening your hearts wherever they rest their heads.

In Christ,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Kipp".

REV. LISA KIPP
Director of
Congregational Engagement
lkipp@lwr.org

P.S. The center spread of this issue is a poster to hang on your church's bulletin board.

P.P.S Don't forget to visit lwr.org/80 to watch and share our anniversary video!

ON THE COVER: *Fela Mbahibwe's children with the LWR quilt they received at a displacement camp in Goma.*

HURRICANE UPDATE:

Your kindness
sweeps through the
southeastern U.S.



Hurricanes Helene and Milton were devastating to our neighbors in North Carolina and throughout the Southeast. Thanks to generous congregations like yours, **help was on the way before the hurricanes even reached land.** And that support continues, as many families are still in need.

IMPACT AREA: LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF QUILTS & KITS

As forecasters tracked the storms' paths, our warehouse team shipped **10 truckloads of LWR Quilts & Kits to targeted locations.** In total, more than **60,000 quilts** and **76,000 kits** were distributed to families whose homes were damaged or destroyed.

IMPACT AREA: CASH GRANTS AND EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

To date, your compassion has provided more than **\$500,000 in grants to local relief organizations** based in affected communities. These trusted partners bulk purchase items such as **bottled water** and **cleaning supplies** locally and distribute them to families in need.

They also provide **direct cash assistance to families**, because cash allows them to purchase whatever they need most — including food, gas, rideshares, diapers and medicine.

Lutheran partners in Florida ready to distribute LWR Quilts & Kits to neighbors whose homes were damaged or destroyed.



REAL PEOPLE, REAL BLESSINGS

One recipient of your loving response, who asked to be called CJ, is the mother of an infant and a **survivor of domestic violence**. She was preparing to move into a new apartment with her baby in Tampa, Florida, when the hurricanes flooded parts of the city.

As CJ waited for a new path to open, she received a **comforting quilt**, a **Baby Care Kit** and a **Personal Care Kit** packed with hygiene supplies. She also received **cash support** to purchase diapers and other essential supplies for her baby.

Thanks to you, **thousands of people have felt the love of Christ** wrapped around them during a difficult time. Thank you for loving our neighbors affected by these devastating storms!



To congregations in the Southeast who are still recovering, we continue to surround you with love, prayers and support! ■

WHAT YOUR LOVE HAS DISTRIBUTED:



As the needs of our neighbors constantly evolve, so does our response. These numbers were updated at the time of publication.

Your ve on the move

How congregations are helping displaced families around the world



UNITED STATES: HURRICANE RELIEF

After hurricanes Helene and Milton, your love distributed LWR Quilts & Kits, bottled water, cash grants, cleaning supplies and more.



UKRAINE: LOVE IN TIMES OF WAR

Across three years of volatility, you've given thousands of people like Frosia Aksenova shelter, food, medical care, LWR Quilts & Kits and more.



MALI: FOOD SUPPORT IN THE DESERT

Kadidja and Mariam's family had a prosperous farm until insurgents forced them out. When they had nothing, you filled their bellies. *Photo by Jake Lyell for LWR.*



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Violence, disaster and other tragedies displaced **1 in every 67** people worldwide last year. Here are some ways your love reached our neighbors living in disaster zones, refugee camps and other places that feel like the furthest thing from home.



SOUTH SUDAN: SUSTAINABLE FOOD SOURCES

They arrived with nothing.
Your love taught Toal Panam
Chuol's mother how to garden so their
family can grow enough to eat and sell.



TÜRKİYE: STABILITY AFTER EARTHQUAKES

Your incredible response
included hot meals,
clean water, shelter, LWR
Quilts & Kits and more for devastated
families like Çağla Sağlam's.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: BASIC COMFORT IN CROWDED CAMPS

You provided LWR Quilts & Kits, food, firewood, cooking
supplies, latrines and more to families like Fela Mbahibwe's
who fled from violent rebels.



VIDEO: Fela is a powerful storyteller. To hear her story, visit
lwr.org/fela or **scan the QR code** with your phone's camera.



Sharing I♥ve...

...in one of the hardest-to-reach

Fela Mbahibwe used to have a small house and a garden. Her children attended school. Then, last spring, everything went sideways.

Her village in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo was attacked by the M23 rebel militia. Her husband was killed.

"I lost my life just like that," she said. **"We just ran. We didn't carry anything.** No utensils, we just took the children. Others died while trying to run. We just continued running."

"We just ran."

Tied together by a rope to avoid separation, the family eventually arrived at a displacement camp near the city of Goma. That is where **your congregation's compassion found her.**

"When we arrived here, we didn't have anything," Fela recalled. "We slept outside. We got rained on. We started building temporary shelters from shrubs that we collected, just to get a place to lie down."



places on Earth

TOP: Fela Mbahibwe and her children with the LWR quilt they received at a displacement camp in Goma.

BOTTOM: Satellite image of tents on the outskirts of Goma.

YOURS IS THE ONLY HELP FELA RECEIVED

Thankfully, Lutheran World Relief has a long history of working in eastern Congo. Last year, despite ongoing violence and challenges, your church's faithful support brought desperately needed help to the crowded camps around Goma.

Your love for these neighbors looks like **food, firewood, kitchen supplies, wash basins, soap and sanitary latrines** to prevent the spread of disease. You helped people access **savings and loan programs** to open small businesses for income. You also ensured families had **LWR Quilts & Kits** to support their comfort and dignity.



"Thank you for all the work
you did for us."

-Fela Mbahibwe

ABOVE: Fela Mbahibwe and her children under the LWR quilt they received at a displacement camp in Goma.

THE HARDSHIPS ARE NOT OVER...

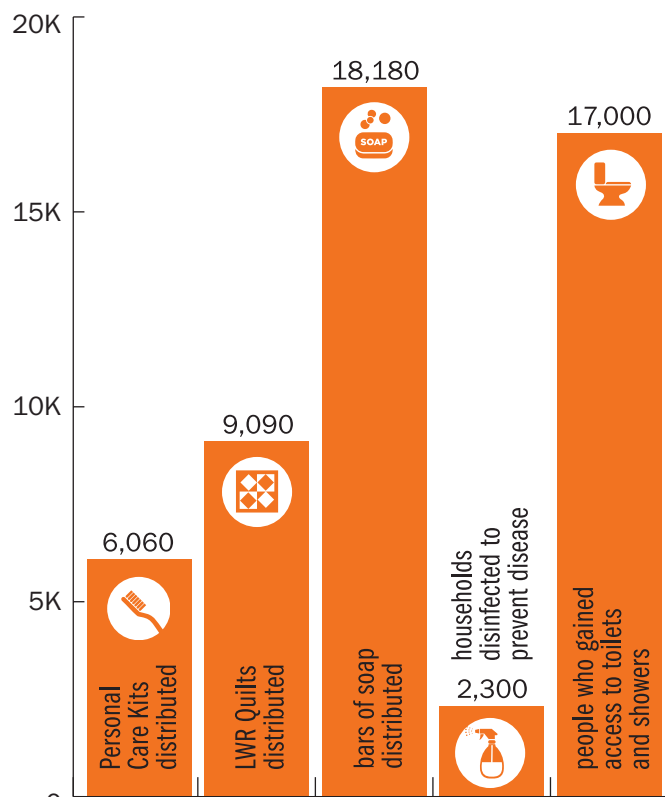
In January 2025, the situation worsened when M23 rebels captured the city of Goma, killing 3,000 people and raping many women in the camp where Fela's family was living. At this time, we do not know if they were among the casualties.

This tragedy continues to unfold, but love prevails. We will keep you updated as our continued response takes shape. In the meantime, **please join us in praying for Fela's family** and the many others who are caught up in this terrible situation.

OUR WORK TOGETHER MUST CONTINUE

Eastern Congo is a volatile place. Goma was briefly overtaken by rebels in 2012. In 2019, an Ebola outbreak killed thousands. Currently, 4.6 million people are displaced. But for **25 years**, your compassion has provided essential health care and other critical support to the precious children of God who live there.

And with your help, we will continue ... **until your love reaches every neighbor.** ■



Your impact for displaced families

among 7 camps and 3,030 tented households



16 camps received water filters and handwashing stations



ABOVE: Women proudly display the LWR quilts they received at a displacement camp in Goma.



VIDEO: WATCH & SHARE

Fela is a powerful storyteller. To hear her story, visit lwr.org/congregations.



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

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Celebrate 80 YEARS WITH US!

Visit lwr.org/80 to:

- **Access** tips for engaging your congregation
- **View** the historical timeline of the LWR Quilt & Kit Ministry
- **Order** LWR Brochures
- **Order** LWR pew envelopes

Until **your love** reaches
every **neighbor**.

VIDEO: WATCH & SHARE WITH YOUR CONGREGATION



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

80

years of loving
our neighbors

**Celebrating 80 years of
sending compassionate
care to our neighbors
around the world**



A special 80th anniversary video is
available online at lwr.org/80



SHARE YOUR CONGREGATION'S LOVE.

Share restoring hope with God's children by giving online at lwr.org/congregations
or by mailing a check to **Lutheran World Relief, PO Box 17061, Baltimore, MD 21297-1061.**

To receive updates, join our email list for congregational leaders at lwr.org/congregations.