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Mercy-USA News

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COVID-19 Response

Since the beginning of the worldwide COVID-19 Pandemic, Mercy-USA for Aid and Development put mitigation strategies to work in all of our project locations around the world.

The global pandemic has required a many-sided approach to the work we do on a daily basis. Field workers, staff and volunteers must be protected while serving vulnerable children and their families in our programs and projects. *Continued...*

Mercy-USA for Aid and Development

is a nonprofit relief and development organization dedicated to alleviating human suffering and supporting individuals and their communities in their efforts to become more self-sufficient.

Incorporated in 1988, Mercy-USA's projects focus on improving health, nutrition and access to safe water, as well as promoting economic and educational growth around the world.

- Registered with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- Special Consultative Status with the United Nations
- Member of InterAction

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Global COVID-19 Mitigation

Continued from page 1... Providing humanitarian help is tough in the best of times, but giving a helping hand to families in need has been and will continue to be a major challenge during the global pandemic. We are safely

carrying out existing projects like food aid and medical care with the additional layers of protection to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus among the communities we are working in. Food distribution sites now have a screening point

before families can receive their food baskets, our medical points of care have also added additional screening to protect the community as well as our own healthcare workers. We've added sanitation stations and provided hygiene kits and PPE to vulnerable communities.

We've also distributed food baskets and grocery cash cards to



vulnerable communities in Detroit, Los Angeles and Baltimore here in the USA and brought food baskets to the elderly and extremely poor



who were in lock-down in countries like Albania.

We've embarked on a public information campaign in many locations where we work to combat misinformation and reinforce the

importance of following the basic physical distancing and face covering protocols that are proven to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Implementing these added safeguards has become second nature for all involved. The need for these added layers of protection will be required for many months and possibly longer, making the work more complicated but our teams are dedicated to protecting the people we serve.



Teaching Families How to Stay Safe in Syria

As part of a larger education campaign, Mercy-USA Community Health Workers in Idlib province, Syria provided COVID-19 community spread education programs at a camp for widows and orphans.

Everyone was taught the proper hand sanitation and hygiene as well as the right way to wear a mask, including the safe method of placing and removing the mask from the face.

Our team conducted engaging exercises on the spread of germs using baby powder. The children learned how germs on one person's hand can easily transfer to the hands of many people through touch. It was a great way to make a very "invisible" threat come to life in a very visible and safe manner.

Mothers also were informed of the facts surrounding the virus and were instructed on how to keep their families and their communities safe.

Additionally, the mothers learned how to stitch simple, washable masks for their family with provided supplies.

These creative and hands-on training sessions are critical to the safety of these vulnerable families.



Beirut Blast

On August 4, 2020, an explosion caused by improperly stored ammonium nitrate at the port in Beirut, Lebanon, rocked the city for miles. The blast is considered to be one of the most powerful non-nuclear explosions in history. The explosion left an estimated 6,000 people injured and more than 180 lives were lost. Reports state that 300,000 people have been left homeless or are in homes that are severely damaged.

Beirut's hospital system was already overwhelmed with COVID-19 cases and the influx of injured quickly became a medical disaster. Mercy-USA for Aid and Development's Lebanon team, stationed just a few hours outside of Beirut mobilized within hours and sent our mobile medical teams and volunteers to the city to offer medical care plus cold water in the searing heat.

Weeks after the blast, we are still operating one mobile medical unit providing follow up care for wounds and even treatment for non-injuries when people are not able to be seen in the local clinics and hospitals. A chronic medicine distribution program has also been implemented.



“The Suffering is Following Us...”

Ahmad Obeid, 20 and his family fled Syria to Beirut in 2012.

Ahmad has been supporting his entire family of seven with his job at the port where the explosion occurred. He is not able to work now due to injuries he sustained in the blast and the severe damage to the port has cost many workers their jobs. He told us, “We fled the destruction in Syria and now the suffering is following us.”

As part of our chronic medicine distribution program in the severely affected areas of Beirut, Mercy-USA delivered Ahmad's grandmother a two month's supply of the prescription medicine she needs. The stress of worrying about how to pay for her medicine relieves some of the burden young Ahmad is carrying for his large family.



Yemen Food Aid

The war in Yemen has been raging since 2015. According to the World Food Program in February, 2020, “Despite ongoing humanitarian assistance, over 20 million Yemenis are food insecure, of which nearly 10 million are acutely food insecure.” Humanitarian food aid is desperately needed.

Mercy-USA is providing monthly food baskets to approximately 3,000 needy people in Yemen with our implementing partner, Turkish Red Crescent. Distributions are taking place in Marib, Aden, Hadramawt and Taiz. These distributions are helping locals in need as well as internally displaced persons from other areas like Sana'a, Hodeida, Hajjah, Amran, etc.





Fresh Meat for Families

For many poor families around the world, fresh meat is a luxury. In observance of the Islamic holiday, Eid al Adha, Mercy-USA distributed fresh meat in Albania, Bosnia, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, USA and Yemen.

The fresh meat provided not only nutritious protein, it allowed families to celebrate the holiday with the joy and happiness special meals provide, especially during difficult circumstances.



Syria Food Aid Increases in Effort to Keep Up with Desperate Need

When starvation is a constant threat to the survival of you and your children, an invisible virus barely registers in your consideration. This is a reality in northern Syria where the price of a packet of bread for a family has increased five times over in just a few months. Aid shipments are the life line for more than 3 million displaced people in the area.

Mercy-USA for Aid and Development is now distributing food aid to approximately a quarter of a million people in Syria. Through generous grants and in partnership with the World Food Program, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Organization for Migration and USAID's Bureau for

Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) we are helping about 250,000 people eat each month.

In addition to monthly food baskets, we're also providing emergency ready to eat meals to newly displaced families thanks to support from USAID/BHA.

Abu Noori's Story

Before the war in Syria, Abu Noori supported his wife (pictured above) and seven children with his job in a carpet factory. He was proud of his work, his house and the life he provided his family. They fled Raqqa, leaving everything behind to find safety and have been displaced at least six times. Most recently, they sought refuge close to the Turkish

border living in a tent next to a generous soul who allows them to shelter on his land rent-free.

Here, Abu Noori can find no factory work for which he is experienced, instead all that surrounds them in this region is agricultural work and he can't find anyone to hire him as labor without some farming experience. The family now relies on a monthly food basket from Mercy-USA and the very little their 16-year-old earns on a nearby farm.

Abu Noori's wife pondered, "People talk about the war ending soon... but we've lost so much, I don't know how we will ever recover from it."



Where We Work • mercyusa.org



Albania

English and computer skills training for orphans
Read to Succeed program for school-age children and teens



Somalia

To date about 700 new or rehabilitated wells for access to clean drinking water throughout Somalia including emergency drought relief
Nutritional support and health services for mothers and children
Hygiene and sanitation training and promotion
Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention
Support for primary & middle schools
COVID-19 Isolation and Treatment Center



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Vocational and career training for orphans, at-risk teens and young adults
Agriculture Education Center to aid farmers, and local communities with sustainable farming methods



The Gaza Strip

With grant funding to UNRWA, support for a special school for blind and visually-impaired elementary school-aged children.



Syria

Monthly food baskets for approximately 250,000 vulnerable persons in northern Syria
Winterization projects for vulnerable children and their families
Shelter, blankets, mattresses, mats for displaced families
Nutritional support and health services
Hygiene and sanitation training and promotion



Indonesia

Aiding farmers and local communities with sustainable farming methods. Also assisting farmers in forming cooperatives.
Seasonal food aid



United States

Seasonal food aid
Support for refugees
Support for Detroit area homeless shelters and disadvantaged students



Kenya

Seasonal food aid



Lebanon

Mobile Medical Clinic for Syrian Refugees and their hosts in Wadi Khalid
Major Surgery support for Palestinian Refugees
Neonatal support for Palestinian Refugees
Meals for hospitalized Covid-19 patients
Mobile Medical Clinic in Beirut
Seasonal food aid



Yemen

Food baskets for displaced persons in Yemen



Pakistan

With funding to implementing partner, The Citizens Foundation (TCF) building a secondary school in Sindh Province



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