

# When disaster strikes

Christian Aid supports people in a crisis.  
Could your church help too?



christian  
**aid**

# Christian Aid and emergencies

**Poverty is a scandal. In partnership with local organisations, Christian Aid works around the world to end the things that make and keep people poor.**



Can you imagine your house reduced to this pile of rubble? This is the reality for many after an emergency. Christian Aid partners are working to help people rebuild their lives.

What would you do if, with little or no warning, your house and everything inside it came crashing to the ground? You might call family, go to stay with friends and even start making claims on your insurance. This is not a possibility for people in the communities with whom Christian Aid works.

When conflict breaks out or a natural disaster strikes, we do everything we can to get immediate help to people whose lives have been turned upside down. We provide food, water, blankets, hygiene kits and emotional support.

**“The cyclone has passed but the real struggle for us starts now. I have nothing left to start my life and have no idea how I will survive.”**

Amita Nayak, India

## **Psalm 46:1-3**

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear,  
though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in  
the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble  
with its tumult.

# How you can help

**Only through generous support from churches and individuals can we give appropriate help for people in emergencies and better-prepare communities for future challenges. We're asking you to help make this happen.**



## Become an Emergency Church

Would your church be willing to hold a collection to help people hit by disasters? Sign up to become an Emergency Church, and whenever there's an emergency we will send you envelopes, and email prayer points and materials for your service.

You can also choose to receive emails twice a year, containing articles to include in your church magazine. These will give you examples of how we and our partners have responded in recent emergencies.

In some situations we are unable to launch a specific appeal, but people

still need urgent help and we are there to support them. Could your church donate to our emergency work to support communities that would otherwise be forgotten? If so, please complete the form at the back of this leaflet.

**'Responding quickly is essential to save lives and reduce suffering... Only once people's basic needs are met can they think about recovery'**

Ciara Loughney, Christian Aid Humanitarian Programme Advisor,

**What part can you play in this vital work?**

**£200** could provide 10 emergency shelters in India to house families who have lost everything.



Rami Devi, 70, lost everything in the Indian floods in 2013. She is standing where her home used to be. Christian Aid partner CASA is working with her to help her rebuild her life.

# How we work

**When an emergency happens, our partners are there on the ground providing immediate help. We have 'rapid-response' funds set aside in case disasters strike. This reserve enables us to put aid in place before donations from the emergency appeal arrive.**

Our aim in any emergency is to provide immediate relief, to help people survive the disaster and limit the impact. However, we also do more than just put people back on their feet. We help them rebuild their lives, to be in a stronger position than they were before. The incredible generosity of the British and Irish public helped us to do this in Haiti after the earthquake in January 2010.

## **During the four years after the disaster, our partners:**

- trained 35,155 people in disaster risk reduction, and helped put community evacuation plans in place
- built 511 houses able to withstand earthquakes and hurricanes – using trained, local masons
- planted 248,000 trees to help reverse the trend of deforestation.

Deforestation, when combined with heavy rains and hurricanes, creates mudslides that destroy crops and bury buildings and people.

Many disasters don't have to have the catastrophic impact that so many do. If communities are prepared, they can look after each other more effectively and lives can be saved. So we also fund long-term work to help limit the impact a disaster might have.



Communities in Haiti are now better prepared to face emergencies. Many have received disasters training and are living in new homes constructed to withstand earthquakes and hurricanes.

# What makes us different?

**Christian Aid works entirely through local partner organisations. They know the communities and can help them before, during and after an emergency.**



In India, Christian Aid partner CASA is training people like Mina, so that in times of emergency (when cyclones such as Phailin are approaching) communities are better prepared and can evacuate in good time.

- After an emergency, we undertake urgent lifesaving work but this takes place in the context of longer-term development.
- We work through faith-based and secular partners, to get resources to where they're most needed.
- We are a member of ACT Alliance, a global, ecumenical church relief and development coalition (see page 11), through which we are able to provide combined, targeted aid.
- We are tackling the root causes of disasters, including campaigning on climate change and challenging governments to better-support people living in poverty.
- We are committed to investing in local capacity and ensuring our work contributes to more resilient communities in the long term.

**'The mission to build their lives and livelihoods is enormous. We will stand beside and support them in the months and years ahead'**

Ram Kishan, Emergency Programme Manager for South Asia

# Natural disasters

**Mary Theresa Convreres watched her house fall apart as Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in November 2013. She was terrified and helpless, unable to rescue her possessions because of the debris flying around.**

**'It became incredibly dark as the wind grew stronger... All I could see was our roof being torn off by the wind. I prayed and prayed that we would be OK'**

Mary Theresa Convreres

During 2013 there were many natural disasters, when erratic weather devastated the lives of poor, marginalised communities.

Immediately after a natural disaster, our partners send teams to assess need. It is vital to provide food, water and shelter for those, like

Mary, who are in shock following their traumatic experience. In the Philippines, 185,000 people were given emergency relief in the typhoon's immediate aftermath.

But the impact of these disasters has a lasting effect. Families have often not only lost homes and loved ones but also their sources of income.

Editha Ponse lost her house and shop in the typhoon. Our partners helped her rebuild her home and gave her a loan to reopen her shop. We are committed to helping communities to rebuild their lives so that they are in a stronger position than before.



We provided the Alejandro family with basic supplies after Typhoon Haiyan flattened their home.

Fourteen million people were affected by Typhoon Haiyan and a further 4 million forced from their homes. Thanks to Emergency Churches, Christian Aid partners were able to give support to devastated communities.



**'We will stand by and support the struggling, poor communities in the years ahead, long after this disaster has faded from the news'**

Daphne Villanueva, Christian Aid's Country Manager in the Philippines

**£21** could provide a month's emergency food for three families who have lost everything.

**£40** could buy essentials for a family whose home has been destroyed – a tarpaulin, blankets, medicine, cooking equipment, buckets, candles and a torch.

**£100** could buy hygiene kits for 50 families, to prevent the spread of disease.

### **Points for prayer at a time of natural disaster**

- Give thanks for survivors. Pray for the comfort and courage they need.
- Pray for those cut off without communication, pray that help will reach them quickly.
- Pray for those who are hungry, thirsty, without shelter, sanitation or medical care, that they will soon have their essential needs met.
- Pray for the safety of our emergency response teams, and for effective action in the face of what they find.

# The disaster of conflict

**'When we were in Syria, we had a house and a car. I was buying and selling livestock and I could buy what [the children] needed. They were happy and we had everything'**

And yet bombings and shootings drove Rafat, Sawsan and their family away from their home in Damascus – the place they had hoped would provide their children with happy and peaceful lives.

The civil war in Syria started in 2011. Since then, violence has escalated and it is estimated that 9.5 million people now need humanitarian assistance. But getting help to those still in Syria is extremely difficult because of the fighting.

To flee from the comfort of your home, because you are terrified and unable to keep your family safe, is the harsh reality for families like Sawsan and Rafat. Many in Syria have had to leave all that they know,

taking with them only what they can carry and sometimes having to walk for days to arrive in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon and Iraq. Our partners are there to help.

**'When we fled Syria we fled with nothing but the clothes we had on'**

Layal Shafa Amri

In Lebanon, there are now more than 1 million refugees, an overwhelming figure for a country with a population of just 4.5 million. Immediate support has been given to the vulnerable, in the form of food, blankets and cooking utensils.

Children are often very distressed by what they see and experience. Our

We are providing thousands of refugees with hygiene kits to help them to keep clean, healthy and maintain a sense of dignity.



## 'It is in the hands of God. We don't know [what will happen]'

Loyal Shafa Amri

partners run alternative education classes and workshops to help them come to terms with these horrors.

Our partner supporting Syrian refugees in northern Iraq is also helping adults to use their skills so that they can work and provide for their families until they are able to return home.

Many of the refugees are desperate to move back to Syria, and the uncertainty of their situation is hard to live with. Loyal Shafa Amri fled the war with her husband and three children. They now live in Lebanon in what used to be an electricity storeroom. She says: 'I would just say thank God for what we do have... We don't know [what will happen]. Some people say that it is reaching a solution, but others say that it is getting worse. If it gets better we will go back and if it doesn't, we will see what happens.'



Syrian refugees have fled to neighbouring countries, creating new pressures in the places where they end up.

**£43** could provide a hygiene kit to ensure disease doesn't spread throughout the refugee camps.

**£60** could buy blankets, mattresses, pillows and a cooking set.

**£200** could supply food for a refugee family for a month – including milk, cheese and beans to keep children healthy.

### Pray:

- for an immediate ceasefire; for an end to violence against all civilians; and ask that the outcome will be a better future for all
- that humanitarian organisations are given the space to assist the needs of those living in poverty and insecurity
- for those experiencing the pain of loss, for families mourning the loss of loved ones, and those who have friends and family members missing
- that those forced to flee their homes are kept safe on their travels and on their arrival in foreign lands.

**Around the world, Christian Aid is closely monitoring potential emergency situations. These are where an emergency develops over time – for example in South Sudan – and we wait for our local partners to say that the need is urgent before we launch an appeal.**



Thousands of people within South Sudan are in need of supplies of food and basic items after fleeing their homes.

In the meantime, Christian Aid is there to help those who are affected by escalating situations.

The crisis in South Sudan developed when President Salva Kiir dismissed Parliament in July 2013. Growing political tensions turned violent and more than 1 million people have now escaped their homes. Many left before the planting season was over, leading to a severe food shortage.

Our partners are providing food, clean water, hygiene kits and shelter to the displaced who fled with nothing but the clothes on their backs. We are able to

**£42** could supply a family with essential items including a sleeping mat, blankets, soap and water basins.

**£80** could provide basic food items to help a family of six survive: 50kg beans, 50kg maize flour, oil and salt.

respond thanks to donations made specifically to support our general emergencies work. If you would like to donate in this way, please use the tear-off form in this leaflet.

**‘We must be battering at the gates of heaven in prayer’**

Archbishop Justin Welby, after he returned from visiting South Sudan in January 2014



More than 20,000 conflict-displaced people live in Juba camp, South Sudan. Recent flooding destroyed hundreds of shelters. Our partner is working there.

We are able to respond to these types of emergencies thanks to donations made specifically to support our general emergencies work. If you would like to make a donation in this way, please use the tear-off form in this leaflet.

To find out more about emerging crises, please visit [christianaid.org.uk/emergencies/areas-of-concern](http://christianaid.org.uk/emergencies/areas-of-concern)

### Pray:

- that a peace agreement and a lasting ceasefire will be reached
- for those who have been forced to flee their homes
- that the international community will provide the urgent, immediate help needed by South Sudanese people.

## Working with other agencies

**Christian Aid is a key member of ACT Alliance, a coalition of 144 members, made up of churches and church-related organisations. Working together, with a combined budget of more than £1bn, members can target aid more effectively – providing both emergency and poverty reduction programmes.**

When disaster strikes in a country where we have no programmes, we can still respond through ACT members rooted in communities. In 2013, we helped people affected by protracted violence in the Central African Republic.

We sent funds through ACT Alliance to assist internally displaced people who had taken refuge in remote locations away from their villages and were living without basic services such as water, sanitation, education and healthcare.



# Donation form

Title

Forename

Surname

House name/number

Postcode

Email

Please complete if you are happy to receive emails from Christian Aid.

This donation is being made by  an individual  a church.

Church name

Church postcode

Please see overleaf for Data Protection statement.

I enclose a cheque/postal order/CAF voucher (made payable to Christian Aid) to

the value of:  £21  £80  £200 or  my choice £    .

Please make cheques payable to Christian Aid (please do not send cash in the post).

Or debit my card:  Visa  Maestro  Mastercard  Amex  CAF card

Start date  /  /  Expiry date  /  /  Issue no

Maestro only

Card

number

Maestro only

Signature

Date

I would prefer not to receive an acknowledgement of my gift.

**Make your gift worth 25% more, at no extra cost to you.**

I want all donations I have made to Christian Aid in the past four years, and any donations I make in the future, to be Gift Aided until I notify you otherwise.

Just tick here Date

A020728

*giftaid it*

I understand that I must pay an amount of UK Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCS) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year (currently 25p for every £1 given). I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not apply. The tax year is 6 April one year to 5 April the next.

  
FundRaising  
Standards Board

## Contact details

### Christian Aid UK

35 Lower Marsh  
Waterloo  
London  
SE1 7RL  
+44 (0) 20 7620 4444  
christianaid.org.uk

### Christian Aid Scotland

First Floor Sycamore House  
290 Bath Street  
Glasgow  
G2 4JR  
+44 (0)141 221 7475  
christianaid.org.uk/Scotland

### Christian Aid Wales

Cymorth Cristnogol/Christian Aid  
5 Station Road  
Radyr  
Caerdydd/Cardiff  
CF15 8AA  
+44 (0) 29 2084 4646  
christianaid.org.uk/cymru

### Christian Aid Northern Ireland

Linden House  
96 Beechill Road  
Belfast  
BT8 7QN  
+44 (0)28 9064 8133  
christianaid.ie

### Christian Aid Ireland

16-17 Clanwilliam Terrace  
Grand Canal Quay  
Dublin 2  
+353 (0)1 611 0801  
christianaid.ie

Christian Aid is a member of

**actalliance**

**Front cover:** a man makes his way through the debris created by Typhoon Haiyan, in the Philippines, after receiving relief items from our partner. We provided food packages and jerry cans to those hardest hit. Christian Aid/Melanie Smith

Inside photos: page 2: Christian Aid/Susan Barry; page 3: Christian Aid/Sarah Filbey; page 4: Christian Aid/Elaine Duigenan; page 5: Christian Aid/Sarah Filbey; pages 6&7: Christian Aid/Melanie Smith; page 8: Christian Aid/Sarah Malian; page 10: Christian Aid/Mike Goldwater

UK registered charity no. 1105851 Company no. 5171525 Scot charity no. SC039150 NI charity no. XR94639  
Company no. NI059154 ROI charity no. CHY 6998 Company no. 426928 The Christian Aid name and logo are  
trademarks of Christian Aid; © Christian Aid Printed on 100% recycled paper July 2014 J2632