



Bringing Hope to Zimbabwe

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UMCOR ADVANCE # 199456
Zimbabwe Emergency

Keeping Hospital Doors Open

Most public hospitals in Zimbabwe have closed, including the two main hospitals in Harare.

Hospital staffs are on strike because their salaries have become worthless in the climate of hyperinflation. In addition, hospitals lack even the most basic medicines and supplies to treat patients.

This deadly brew of crises means that there is virtually no medical care for the country’s poor—the ones most at risk for cholera. Nyadire and Mutambara United Methodist Hospitals serve everyone, regardless of their ability to pay.

“Our own staff are doing all they can to keep the hospital doors open, even in the face of their own suffering,” says Dr. Kalindi Thomas, General Board of Global Ministries missionary. Her recent trip to visit United Methodist hospitals in Zimbabwe revealed a grim situation.

“Nyadire and Mutambara Hospitals are open in spite of the non-availability of drugs and very low salaries of the staff. And the hospitals are full,” she reports.

UMCOR’s efforts to provide additional support will go a long way to give a lifeline to thousands.

Economic collapse, hyperinflation, food shortage, cholera epidemic, and a failing infrastructure have combined to cause great suffering throughout Zimbabwe.

UMCOR is providing a multi-pronged response to provide relief to some untold thousands who are suffering. Food distribution and additional support for United Methodist hospitals in December have begun to alleviate the suffering of many thousands in the days ahead. Providing clean water in Nyadire and additional long-term projects are also part of UMCOR’s future plans in Zimbabwe.

Food

One hundred metric tons of grain were delivered to 12 United Methodist districts in Zimbabwe in mid-December—reaching more than 1,200 households and 11,000 primary school students. ZOE Ministry, a program of the North Carolina Annual Conference, facilitated the delivery for UMCOR.

The grain will provide each person with an additional meal for 65 days. This is much-needed relief in an economy where a loaf of bread can cost half of one’s monthly salary. UMCOR is also working with the Zimbabwe Conference to secure documentation that will allow UMCOR to directly import and distribute food supplies in Zimbabwe.

UMCOR has 400 metric tons of maize ready to be delivered to Zimbabwe as soon as these documents are secured.

Photo: A ZOE food shipment reaches a town in Zimbabwe.
Courtesy ZOE Ministry

Health

United Methodist hospitals in Zimbabwe are keeping their doors open in spite of great hardship. UMCOR is helping to ease the burden by implementing a six month plan to shore up the hospitals so that they can keep operating in the current cholera epidemic and economic collapse in Zimbabwe.

UMCOR is providing essential support for these hospitals to enable them to better cope with the worsening health situation in Zimbabwe and the cholera crisis in particular. Cholera kits to fully treat a total of 2,600 people will be sent to Nyadire and Mutambara Hospitals to help them specifically address the cholera epidemic in their areas.

Additional funds will be sent to the hospitals each month for the next six months to provide additional salary support for staff, food, medical supplies, and fuel for generators and vehicles, so that the hospitals can continue serving their communities despite the difficult circumstances.

Water

UMCOR is also working with the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference to rebuild and rehabilitate water services and equipment for Nyadire United Methodist Hospital and surrounding areas. Poor water quality and sanitation facilities are the main causes of cholera. This project will greatly improve the health and quality of life for those living in the Nyadire area—approximately 500,000 people.

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